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Inter-Arab Affairs

'Abd-al-Majid Arab League Nomination Supported

NC1104075291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0710 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 Apr (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR reports today that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad expressed Syria's support for the nomination of Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, to the post of Arab League secretary general. This support was in the message conveyed to President Husni Mubarak by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' the day before yesterday.

The newspaper indicated that the Libyan Jamahiriyah also voiced support for this nomination during President Mubarak's talks with brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in Libya the day before yesterday, Tuesday.

Eight Countries Plan Further Cooperation Talks

LD1104144091 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Apr 91 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Mubarak And 'Arafat In Libya; Reports of Mediation by al-Qadhdhafi"]

[Excerpts] Tripoli, Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, news agencies—Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Libyan President Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi yesterday held talks in Tripoli, where President Mubarak arrived on an unannounced visit lasting several hours.

At the same time, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Tripoli, and it was reported that President Mubarak and 'Arafat met after mediation by President al-Qadhdhafi designed to reconcile them.

The reports said that the meeting dealt with several subjects including, first and foremost, coordination to resolve the Palestinian issue, Arab solidarity, Arab-Arab reconciliations, and the future of peace in the Middle East region. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, informed political sources have confirmed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that an important meeting will be held by the foreign ministers of the eight Arab states—that is, Egypt, Syria, and the six Gulf Cooperation Council states—before the end of April. It will focus on a discussion of final arrangements for convening a summit of the eight states for the final endorsement of the Damascus declaration on cooperation and coordination.

The sources said that bilateral meetings between the leaders of the eight states will be held within the next few days to discuss the foundations for cooperation and coordination in the light of the Damascus declaration and to coordinate joint efforts to move the Palestinian issue toward a solution. The sources said that Egypt and Syria emphasized to the six Gulf states their total willingness to provide further cooperation and military aid in order to protect Gulf security and the region's security, and to meet any requirements submitted by the Gulf states, out of commitment to the provisions of the Damascus declaration, namely, that the Egyptian and Syrian forces in the Gulf constitute the nucleus of an Arab peace force.

The sources pointed out that supervision of an Arab peace force would be conducted through an agreement among the Arab parties participating in that force, and not through an Arab committee belonging to the Arab League. The informed sources expect such a force to be formed and its deployment to be determined in the first half of this year.

Editorial Reviews Impact of Baker Mideast Talks

PM1104114291 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Apr 91 p 15

[Editorial: "Bakers, Messages, and Halfway"]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's announcement in Jerusalem that his talks with Israeli officials scored a breakthrough indicates that the Shamir government has understood the U.S. message. Baker's affirmation that his country "has not at all ruled out the possibility of convening an international conference, but believes that it is not the right time yet" represents a message to the other side.

The U.S. secretary of state's eagerness to say that there is still a long way to go before peace is achieved and that there are numerous details that must be discussed reflects an anxiety not to hastily arouse hopes in order to avoid a quic' return to feelings of frustration.

Baker's agreement to meet with his Jordanian opposite number in Geneva—despite the Gulf crisis' effects on relations between the two countries—reflects Washington's eagerness to enhance the dialogue with the parties invited to play a role in future peace negotiations. Baker's new meeting with Palestinian figures aims in essence to indicate that settlement efforts will not overlook the Palestinian side's role, even though the issue of PLO participation is subject to argument and discussion.

Israel's haste to announce its intention to release 1,000 Palestinian prisoners reflects the Shamir government's feeling that it must respond to the U.S. desire to reactivate the peace process. True, releasing 1,000 prisoners will not change the essence of the problem or the dispute, but what is certain is that the Shamir government is trying to avoid rashly swimming against the tide or lapsing into isolation at a time when the international community is emphasizing its determination to tackle the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Baker's statement that his country has definitely not ruled out the possibility of convening an international conference seems to be addressed to the Arab capitals included in his tour, specifically Damascus and Cairo. Perhaps what is happening now is an attempt to meet

halfway between the call for an international conference and the call for a regional conference that would constitute a starting point for the launch of negotiations.

The Israeli foreign minister's announcement that Washington wants Moscow's participation in the peace process indicates that the U.S. Administration does not intend to exclude others from the peace process but, rather, wishes for their participation—and at a realistic level.

The fact remains that experience has shown the difficulty of progress in resolving this chronic conflict, in which border wars combine with wars for survival and real fears mix with artificial fears. The settlement journey will not be easy, especially because, in order for stances to mature, there must be the role of an intermediary called in time.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Denies Involvement in Northern Iraq Events

LD1104171691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The official spokesman for the PLO has made the following statement:

The PLO was surprised when its office in Stockholm received a letter from the Committee for the Coordination of Kurdish and Kurdistani Parties and Organizations in Sweden claiming, without justification, the participation of Palestinian fighters in events currently taking place in northern Iraq.

While the PLO categorically refutes such claims, it finds that this persistence to thrust it, together with its fighters, into this conflict, consciously or unconsciously, serves purposes hostile to the Palestinian people and their struggle to regain their national rights and occupied territory.

'Abd-Rabbuh Discusses Israel, Occupied Territories

LD1104191791 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Yesterday, PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh stressed that the only measure that would generate trust, and which would be capable of ("starting) the peace process in the Middle East is for Israel to announce its commitment to a withdrawal from the occupied territories. He said that the U.S. move [as heard] must aim at forcing Israel to implement the UN resolutions, especially regarding a withdrawal from the Palestinian territories under its occupation, and to provide the means that would avail the Palestinian people the opportunity to use their right of self-determination.

DFLP Internal Factions Dispute Intensifies

TA1204042591 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0400 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] The internal struggle in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] has intensified against the backdrop of the split in the PLO leadership. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that a war of leaflets is currently under way, involving mutual mud slinging between the two factions: those who support Hawatimah, and those who support Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh.

PFLP: No Palestinian Solution Without PLO

LD1104204291 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] In a statement distributed in Damascus, brother Abu 'Ali Mustafa, deputy secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and member of the PLO Executive Committee, reiterated that there can be no solution to the question of Palestine without the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Therefore, the U.S. Administration has to address no one else but the PLO leadership.

As to the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, it reaffirmed through its spokesman that recognition of the Palestinian people's rights is inalienable, and that dialogue with the PLO, in its capacity as the sole representative of the Palestinian people, is the basis for any settlement of the Palestinian issue. The spokesman went on to add that if the United States is really serious about activating the process of settlement and peace, it only has to negotiate with the PLO and the other parties to the conflict within the context of an international conference and the implementation of international legitimacy.

Algeria

Salvation Front To Participate in Elections

LD1104221691 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] A press conference was held this evening at the Safir Hotel by the National Salvation Front [NSF], at which Abderrahmane Adjerid, its chairman, announced his own candidacy for the legislative elections. The conference covered several points, including the attitude of the front to the strike announced by eight parties.

Our colleague Mourad Maddaoui contacted Mr. Adjerid. His first question centered on the attitude of the party toward the elections, and the strike announced by the eight parties.

[Begin recording] [Adjerid] First, the NSF National Council was appointed yesterday. On this occasion, the front decided to take part in the next legislative elections. The National Council does not take part in the strike [as heard] but puts forward candidates, depending on its capabilities, in the constituencies subsequently specified.

[Maddaoui] As far as the elections are concerned, does it mean you have no reservations over the elections law and the division of constituencies?

[Adjerid] There are reservations. Incidentally, I should point out that a meeting of the nine [as heard] parties was recently held at the Aures hotel. We were among them. We issued a communique expressing reservation over the election law and the division of the constituencies. Despite the reservations, however, we decided to participate in the elections.

[Maddaoui] Could it be said that the front is considering a new alliance?

[Adjerid] In the first phase the front will make an individual entry, it will proceed with its candidates, depending on its capabilities. The issue of the alliance will come in the second phase. The first phase is for the front's individual entry. [end recording]

FIS Leader Denies Conflicts With Deputy

LD1104181291 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Despite rumors, Abassi Madani [leader of the Islamic Salvation Front—FIS] denies the existence of any conflict between him and 'Ali Belhadj, number two in the FIS. He also denies any link between his party and the attack on the house of the Algerian Red Crescent president.

[Begin recording] [Madani] There are absolutely no conflicts between me and 'Ali Belhadj.

[Unidentified interviewer] Regarding the elections, will you participate in them?

[Madani] We said that we would participate in the elections providing that the spurious and unjust laws created recently are not taken into consideration. This is the first undertaking. The second undertaking, as stipulated in the statement, was that early presidential elections must coincide—held on the same day—with the early [people's] National Assembly elections.

[Interviewer] Regarding the strike, have you set a date for it?

[Madani] We have not set a date. We are still waiting for a reply from the president.

[Interviewer] Mr. Abassi, we return to the issue of the attack on the house of Mr. Belabouane [Algerian Red Crescent president]. Accusing fingers have been pointing at the FIS.

[Madani] We would expect FIS to be accused. First they claim that there is conflicts between us and the Red Crescent. This is definitely not true. This is a fabrication, and has absolutely no basis. If there was an attack, God knows, but I do not believe that there was one. In any case, it is not possible that the FIS would strike a fly with a cannon. [end recording]

Egypt

'Land for Peace' for Success of Dialogue Stressed

NC1204090491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0715 GMT 12 Apr 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Cairo, 12 Apr (MENA)—In a commentary entitled: "Baker's Efforts and Shamir's Intransigence," AL-JUMHURIYAH emphasizes that the Arab man in the street believes that the current American efforts to achieve an integrated Middle East peace initiative is a important test of the new international order based on constructive dialogue and international cooperation for construction, it is also a test of American credibility.

The paper says that the process is not easy, clear intentions and sincerity to peace are required, especially from the Israeli side. Therefore, there is no escape for the Israeli Government of Yitzhaq Shamir but to declare its commitment to the principle of land for peace as a condition for the success of the dialogue.

Application Filed To Prosecute U.S. Embassy

NC1204105091 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 8 Apr 91 p 33

[From the "To and From Egypt" column]

[Text] In an unprecedented move, the Egyptian prosecutor general filed an application with the Foreign Ministry requesting permission to take the U.S. Ambassador in Cairo Frank Wisner and members of the U.S Embassy to court for selling over 40 feddans of land owned by the

al-Giza governorate and pocketing 4 million Egyptian pounds. These allegations were proven during the investigation.

The U.S. Embassy in Cairo obtained the land from al-Giza governorate to build a U.S. museum, consulate, condominium, and guest house in the governorate. Two years after obtaining the site, the ambassador and embassy members sold it to an Egyptian investor who plans to build a number of private projects. The U.S. ambassador took the money for himself and deposited it in his personal account with the "American Express" bank in preparation for pending transfer to the United States.

'Abd-al-Majid, Mock on Meeting With Mubarak

NC1104155391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1146 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 11 Apr (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stated that President Mubarak's meeting with the Austrian foreign minister today was fruitful. He added that the meeting dealt with bilateral relations, which he described as excellent.

He said the Austrian foreign minister's visit provides an opportunity to bolster bilateral relations in the political, economic, and cultural fields.

He noted that the peace process and the current related moves were also discussed at the meeting. He said that Egypt is very eager to reach a peaceful solution to the outstanding Middle East problems.

He added: We and our Austrian friends hold identical views on the need to achieve a peaceful solution to the Middle East dispute.

For his part, Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock highly assessed his meeting with President Husni Mubarak today. He noted that his talks with President Mubarak had given him a better understanding of the situation in the Middle East.

Alois Mock said he was pleased President Mubarak was "optimistic" after his talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, despite the existence of "enormous problems."

The Austrian foreign minister expressed his country's conviction that security in the Middle East and security in Europe were interconnected. He expressed the hope that the importance of this interdependence is now understood by everyone in Europe, especially in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

He said that Austria, as a pioneering neutral state, is committed to contributing to the new peace structure in the region.

Alois Mock was asked about the talks he held with James Baker on Middle East issues in Cairo yesterday. He said the U.S. secretary of state expressed optimism about the possibility of holding negotiations between the Arab states and Israel and between Israel and the Palestinians.

The Austrian foreign minister said James Baker, nevetheless, told him that there are "difficult problems" which need to be resolved before such a result can be achieved, although he felt reasonably optimistic.

Concluding his statements, Alois Mock affirmed that Austria will work during the next few months to lift some of the burdens borne by the regional states as a result of the Gulf crisis.

Mubarak Receives Saudi Foreign Minister

LD1204100891 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0947 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 12 Apr (SPA)—His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt this morning received the [Saudi] foreign minister, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, who is currently visiting Cairo.

The meeting was attended by Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Libya

Poison Gas Factory Plans Reach 'Third Party'

LD1104145291 Hamburg DPA in German 1304 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Stuttgart (DPA)—Plans for the poison gas factory that the Imhausen-Chemie firm in Lahr supplied to Libya have apparently reached a third party. This was reported by Southwest German radio in its program "Politics Southwest" yesterday evening and by Berlin's TAGESZEITUNG in today's edition. They state that Western security circles have specific information indicating that the poison gas blueprints were passed on to an unnamed third country. It is apparently a developing country that had placed orders and received deliveries on the basis of the blueprints. It was unclear whether the blueprints originated from Libya or from Imhausen-Chemie circles, the media sources report.

According to research by Western intelligence services, Libya still intends to produce chemical warfare agents. Apart from the "Pharma 150" poison gas plant delivered to al-Rabitah by Imhausen, which was—it is assumed—badly damaged by a fire in March 1990, the Libyans are planning a second chemical weapons plant west of the provincial capital of Sabha. In a letter to the federal chancellor's office about a year ago, the Federal Intelligence Service reported that it "is very similar to the Pharma 150 plant near al-Rabitah." Documents acquired by Southwest German Radio showed that the

second factory probably also comes from Imhausen-Chemie. Work on a project entitled Pharma 200 had been under way there since 1987.

The state prosecutor's office in Mannheim has been investigating senior employees of the Imhausen firm, partly because of Pharma 200, since August 1990. In June 1990 Imhausen boss Juergen Hippenstiel was sentenced to five years' imprisonment due to the delivery of the first poison gas factory to al-Rabitah.

*Plot To Oust Al-Qadhdhafi 'Uncovered'

91P402101A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 31 Mar 91 p 9

[Text] Libyan authorities have uncovered the existence of secret collaboration between the Muslim Brotherhood organization, whose activities have been banned in Libya, and the National Islamic Front [NIF], which stands behind the ruling military regime in Sudan.

AL-ASHIQQA' had published in a previous issue that the Sudanese Government has been giving weapons training to a number of fundamentalists from several Arab countries at secret military camps in Sudan to prepare them for changing the political systems in their countries. Informed political sources confirmed that the NIF had made constant contacts among Brotherhood members to urge them to move to overthrow Colonel al-Qadhdhafi and transform Libya into a religious state patterned after the situation existing in Sudan.

The sources also indicated that the Libyan authorities had arrested a number of Brotherhood members who had admitted that there was coordination with the NIF's leadership in Sudan and that they received military training last year in one of the remote regions of Sudan.

The sources asserted that Libyan-Sudanese relations will witness great strain in the near term, especially since Libyan authorities have stopped pumping oil to the Khartoum government as they have been doing for the last two years.

'Arafat Arrives in Tripoli 11 Apr

LD1104190991 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1850 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Tripoli, 11 Apr (JANA)—Brother Yasir 'Arafat, the president of the State of Palestine, and the delegation accompanying him, arrived in Tripoli this evening on a visit to the great Jamahiriyah. The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Communications and Maritime Transport welcomed him at Tripoli International Airport. The ambassador and staff members of the embassy of the State of Palestine to the great Jamahiriyah attended also the welcome. [as received]

Meets Al-Qadhdhafi, Departs

LD1204073691 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0715 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Tripoli, 12 Apr (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution [Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] received yesterday evening Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. President 'Arafat left Tripoli yesterday evening following a visit to the great Jamahiriyah.

Somali Prime Minister Arrives for Visit

LD1104035191 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2200 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Excerpt] The Somali prime minister, Umar Arteh Ghalib, and the delegation accompanying him arrived at the Gulf of Sidra Airport yesterday evening on a visit to the great Jamahiriyah. [passage omitted]

Received by Al-Qadhdhafi

LD1104204991 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1845 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Tripoli, 11 Apr (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution has received brother Umar Arteh Ghalib, the prime minister of brotherly Somalia. The meeting was attended by the brother secretary of the people's committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation.

Brother Umar Arteh Ghalib is a son of the Arab nation who has worked openly to assert Somalia's Arab identity through its membership in the Arab League [as received], and he is one of the strugglers who has been subjected to imprisonment and oppression for his beliefs.

Brother Arteh has an excellent brotherly relationship with the brother leader of the revolution. Brother Umar Arteh Ghalib was released from prison because of the brother leader's personal intervention. Brother Umar Arteh has paid many visits to the great Jamahiriyah, the last of which was on 13 November 1980, when he was received by the brother leader of the revolution.

Brother Umar Arteh Ghalib recited a poem in which he expressed his feelings toward the brother leader of the revolution, the supporter of Arabism, Islam, and a proponent of the freedom and happiness of all mankind.

Western Sahara

Statement Issued on Former Polisario Leader

LD1104110991 Algiers APS in Arabic 0849 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Algiers, 11 Apr (APS)—The Information Ministry of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic [SADR] has issued a press release published in Algeria denouncing the propaganda campaign conducted by the Moroccan

Interior Ministry. The SADR ministry also denied reports concerning a Polisario leader.

The press release stated: Since 8 April, Moroccan newspapers, and through them Mr. Basri [Moroccan interior and information minister], have not stopped talking about the case of the decision of a Polisario leader. The release added that the Polisario Front would like to supply the following clarifications: Mr. Abdallah Ould Bouh, who holds Mauritanian nationality, joined the ranks of the Polisario Front at his own request. He remained with the front until 1989 when he decided freely to return to his country.

The press release added that since that time, Mr. Ould Bouh has no longer been a member of the Political Bureau of the Polisario Front, and has been supported by Moroccan intelligence services.

The release also indicates that less than a month ago, Mr. Ould Bouh travelled to Paris, accompanied by Omar Hadrami [founder member of Polisario Front who defected to Morocco in 1990], to make a statement which he learned by heart. He now lives in Rabat.

The Polisario Front press release stated that the so-called Ould Bouh was a former official spokesman of the secretary general of the Polisario Front, and that he is vainly trying to revive a dead card.

In conclusion, the press release stressed that such allegations fall within the framework of the psychological war that has been and still is being conducted by the Moroccan regime against the Saharan people, particularly on the eve of the occurrence of significant incidents. The press release added: Such chaos aims at diverting the attention from the wave of detention carried out by Morocco against Saharan youths in Oujda on 6 April, and also at slowing down the international campaign led by Amnesty International regarding the violation of human rights in Morocco which both the Moroccan and the Saharan people, who are still under occupation, are suffering from.

Kuwait

Official Interviewed on Returning Prisoners

LD12040113491 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 2035 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Interview with Kuwaiti Air Force Staff Colonel 'Abdallah al-Kandari, "member of the allied joint committee on prisoners issues", by unidentified reporter, from the "Kuwait Message" program; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] Dear viewers, the civilian prisoners and detainees, and also those who are missing, have a long story which is far from over. The parties concerned in this dear homeland are following this issue with interest and consideration. In this interview with our guest Staff Colonel Abdallah al-Kandari, we will follow the issue of civilian prisoners and detainees. Colonel Abdallah, welcome to this interview on Kuwait Television.

[Al-Kandari] Greetings.

[Reporter] Colonel Abdallah, a number of prisoners were recently handed over in Saudi Arabia in five groups. More were handed over in Saudi Arabia a few days ago. Could we have the final total of civilian prisoners and detainees who have been handed over?

[Al-Kandari] A human rights committee has been formed under the chairmanship of the undersecretary of the justice ministry, Abd al-'Aziz al-Dakhil, and all the prisoners and those who are missing have been registered by their families at Shikhan al-Farsi hall.

At the 21 March meeting between the allies and the Iraqi team, matters related to the issue of Iraqi prisoners and detainees in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the one hand, and Kuwaiti and allied prisoners in Iraq, on the other hand, have been discussed and examined. The Iraqi authorities have been requested to provide lists of the names of all prisoners in Iraq, POW's or civilians. The Iraqi authorities promised to provide lists of names within two weeks after that meeting. We expected to receive the names of all the prisoners, but we were given no more than 6,000 names. We provided lists of 11,706 civilian prisoners and detainees. The groups we received at the beginning amounted to 1,180. These had been received at the beginning of the supervision by the Red Cross. This operation was not organized, in fact, because the Red Cross had not been allowed to enter Iraqi prisons to register Iraqi prisoners.

The Red Cross was allowed, after it asked for permission from the Iraqi authorities, to visit the first, second and the following groups in the prisons, and issued them cards on which were written—the cards had two copies, one which remained with the prisoner and the other one with the Red Cross—statements by the prisoners. At the moment of registration, the statements of the prisoner were taken down, and at the moment the prisoner is handed over, the prisoner's copy is taken and is checked against the other copy of the Red Cross to verify the identity of the prisoner to be handed over.

There were other groups, another one, a group of 1157 on 23 March. On 24 March, 997 prisoners were handed over. On 25 March, 1147 prisoners were handed over, and on 27 March, 679 prisoners were handed over, including officers.

[Reporter] This is the fifth group.

[Al-Kandari] Yes.

[Reporter] It was handed over in Saudi Arabia.

[Al-Kandari] Naturally, all five groups we are talking about were handed over in Saudi Arabia, apart from the first group. [passage omitted]

We were handed over a batch of about 100 persons. This is perhaps the last group we have so far received. We expect that at the next meeting new lists of names will be given to us. The Iraqi authorities have, up to now, been saying that they have no lists, and that no one is imprisoned in Iraqi jails. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Colonel, what was the total number of prisoners?

[Al-Kandari] In the group delivered to the Red Cross and to the Iraqi authorities, there were 11,706.

[Reporter] How many have been received so far?

[Al-Kandari] We have received 6,679 prisoners.

[Correspondent] In other words, there are about 4,000 prisoners?

[Al-Kandari] Indeed, so far there have been about 4,000 prisoners. Naturally, we believe that, God willing, they are safe, because we do not know if they are missing. What we do know for sure is that they had been taken away by the Iraqi authorities. Their whereabouts—that is something which we do now know, but which we are seriously pursuing with the help of the allies, whom we thank, who assist us in every meeting by putting pressure on the Iraqi authorities to release the rest of the prisoners and detainees.

[Reporter] Colonel, do you have exact figures concerning the subject of the killed?

[Al-Kandari] The number of the killed, who have obviously been registered at hospitals, from 5 August to 3 March was 1,082, among them 158 children aged from nine to 13, 57 mentally retarded, 120 children taken from nurseries and killed, 13 miscarriages resulting from rape. The total is 1,082. The rest of the cases are either torture-related deaths or assassinations. These are cases that have been registered. We know nothing about other non-registered cases.

[Reporter] In other words, cases that have not been registered.

[Al-Kandari] Yes, there are cases that have not been registered by Health Ministry official authorities at hospitals, and that we know nothing about. [passage omitted]

Elections, Higher Political Participation Viewed

PM1104142291 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 10 Apr 91 pp 1, 3

[Muhammad al-Rumayhi article: "Our Friends and Our Enemies"]

[Excerpts] Unquestionably Kuwait has experienced the severest political conditions over the past eight months. There can be no doubt that only politically and socially mature people could survive such circumstances, which were more like an earthquake. [passage omitted]

Kuwait's program of political action, as broadly outlined by Jabir al-Ahmad, has been welcomed by all Kuwaitis. Yet some people have said: Why has no specific date been set for the elections?

Such questions seem to be anything but innocent in their timing, and illogical in their principle and details, for the simple and obvious reason that, as people who ask such questions know, the amir draws up the broad guidelines of the state's general policy and then the government, once formed, takes care of the details pertaining to the implementation of that policy with due consideration for the subjective circumstances of the particular stage. At the top of the list of these details are such matters as civil organization, names, lists, constituencies, security, and economic and social facilities. All these are difficult tasks. It may be easy to talk about them, but implementation requires effort, time, and patience.

No sane person can overlook these extraordinary difficulties, because the results of the earthquake that hit our country are not only economic but also social, political, and intellectual, and it will take time to study them in depth. Haste in such crucial matters is dangerous. Elections, as we all know, are no picnic. We are all aware of the tremendous pressures put on our society during the crisis, bringing to the surface some sensitivities that would be acceptable under normal conditions but in the current phase of wound-dressing they entail risks and negative aspects outweigh their possible positive points. [passage omitted]

In the program of political action outlined by the amir there are two issues affecting all of society that are of extreme historical importance. The first is the issue of second class citizens and the other is the issue of women. They are two sides of the same coin, which is the expansion of political participation. All wise and reasonable people agree that, after that massive earthquake that has shaken the homeland, the participation base must be enlarged, a decision must be adopted in that direction, and individual wishes and narrow interests must be overcome, because a homeland can only be built by its own people, both men and women. The nation's amir has made the decisions. That is a historic step to his credit. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Lebanese Prime Minister Thanks King for Aid

LD1204072791 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0642 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Beirut, 11 Apr (SPA)—Lebanese Prime Minister 'Umar Karami has expressed his gratitude to King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, for the new assistance provided by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Lebanon, which is valued at 60 million dollars. In a statement today, Karami described the relations between the Kingdom and Lebanon as advanced, and expressed his satisfaction at that.

Pakistan's Sharif Arrives for Minor Pilgrimage

LD1104173191 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1655 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Jeddah, 11 April (SPA)—Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif arrived in Jeddah this evening on a visit to the Kingdom to perform the rites of the 'umrah [minor pilgrimage]. [passage omitted]

Hammadi Receives Yemeni Housing Minister

NC1104150791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1445 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 Apr (INA)—Prime Minister Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi today received Yemeni Housing and Planning Minister Muhammad Ahmad Sulayman. Talks during the meeting dealt with the fraternal relations between the two countries and the means to strengthen them in all fields. Developments in the political situation were also reviewed.

Salman arrived in Baghad the day before yesterday on a visit of several days.

Speaker Views Relations With Iran, Assembly Work

NC1104134991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1205 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 Apr (INA)—National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih has said that the National Assembly would like to host a meeting of the Arab Parliamentary Union [APU] in the near future.

In an interview with ALIF BA' magazine published here, Salih said that the Assembly is pursuing this goal within the framework of a plan to bolster cooperation with the APU and Arab parliaments and to serve the cause of Iraq, a country that is being subjected to a terrible conspiracy aimed at humiliating and impoverishing it for decades to come.

Referring to Iraq's external relations, Salih said that these relations must be based on an equitable and balanced foundation, on mutual respect, and on the principle of noninterference in internal affairs. Salih said that Iraq has dealt with Iran on that basis and in a serious manner.

Salih expressed regret that the recent events have provided concrete proof that there are certain people in Iran who think differently and who are scheming to destroy and weaken Iraq. He added that such an attitude is wrong.

Salih called on Iran to abandon this dangerous attitude and to stop interfering in Iraq's internal affairs, because such interference is dangerous and unacceptable.

Discussing the future work of the National Assembly, Salih said that the most important topic the Assembly will debate during its spring session is legislation concerning Iraq's new Constitution and the laws that will stem from this legislation, particularly those concerning parties, publications, and the press.

Salih said: We believe that despite the difficult circumstances we are encountering, the current phase has given us a rich experience and has taught us profound lessons that will add vitality to our march and lead to the entrenchment of democratic practices and the expansion of the scope of participation in the running of the state's affairs to encompass the entire people.

Salih said that under the new Constitution, the National Assembly will discuss and approve the government's program. The assembly, he noted, will work diligently to entrench the democratic methods that are backed by the authority of the Constitution and the law, for this is the surest means of enhancing our national efforts in the coming stage.

Justice Ministry Replaces Destroyed Files, Records

NC1204120691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1050 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Apr (INA)—Minister of Justice Shabib Lazim al-Maliki has declared that the ministry has prepared alternative records in lieu of the records and files destroyed and set ablaze by the gangs of mobs and sabotage.

In a statement to INA, the minister said that the ministry and its departments had adopted all the basic measures which would guarantee the rights of the citizens as stipulated in the records and documents of the ministry's departments in the governorates attacked by the mobs.

The minister pointed out that the alternative records and files had been prepared on the basis of the information and files kept at the ministry's central departments in Baghdad. These contain the citizens' rights of disposal over their private property in the land register, the money of the minors, and the personal statute.

RCC Extends Amnesty for Kurds by One Week

NC1104172391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1657 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 Apr (INA)—The Revolutionary Command Council [RCC] today issued a decision extending the general amnesty to Iraqi Kurds by one week as of tomorrow, Friday, which was the deadline established by the first amnesty.

The statement said: In view of the difficulty of communications and the obstacles created by aggression in the northern region of the country, the RCC today decided to extend the general amnesty offered in the RCC's statement of 5 April 1991 for one week as of the expiration of the deadline established in this statement.

The statement adds that all state organs, including the Armed Forces, are asked to abide by the decision and to provide the necessary facilities.

In its 5 April statement, the RCC announced it had decided to pardon the Iraqi Kurds in the autonomous region for any act punishable by law, except for acts of murder, rape, or theft, which took place under the conditions of the incidents of rioting and treachery.

The statement gave persons covered by the amnesty a one-week deadline if they were in Iraq and a two-week deadline if they were outside Iraq.

Kurdish Rebels Claim Liberation of Dukan

NC1204070791 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 0615 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] According to an urgent dispatch received from the city of al-Sulaymaniyah, our Kurdish rebels have liberated the city of Dukan, where Iraq's largest dam is located. Dukan's liberation came after an all-out attack launched last night. The rebels inflicted heavy losses on the Saddam regime's men and equipment in the city. The remainder of the regime's forces fled after failing to repel the rebels' sudden attack. Our rebels have hereby proven that they can deal decisive blows to the regime's forces wherever they may be and at any time.

This heroic operation was carried out in retaliation for the regime's crimes against the defenseless Kurdish citizens in northern Iraq.

It is worth noting that our heroic rebels recently liberated [words indistinct] and Salah-al-Din in Irbil Governorate from the filth of the gangs of criminal Saddam.

Opposition Forces Report Two Liberated Areas

NC1004204191 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1937 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Despite the regime's violence and tyranny against our courageous Kurdish kinfolk, the resistance operations continue. An urgent dispatch from Irbil Governorate says that the heroic revolutionaries managed to liberate Raniyah and Salah-al-Sin Districts from the filth of Saddam's despicable gangs and that other fierce battles are taking place in the northern part of the homeland. We will provide details of these battles in later casts.

Bodies Found in Mass Graves in Al-Sulaymaniyah

NC1104191791 Paris AFP in English 1851 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Al-Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, April 11 (AFP)—More than 450 bodies have been found in mass graves around al-Sulaymaniyah after Kurdish rebels were driven out of the northern Iraqi city, a municipal worker said here Thursday.

An AFP correspondent who visited the city saw corpses, covered in mud, being lifted into refrigerated trucks headed for the local morgue. They had been dug up by young army recruits.

Some of the victims, wearing military uniform, had bullets wounds in the head and their hands tied behind their back. Others had been decapitated or had their arms and legs chopped off.

The municipal worker, Ahmad Sharif, told foreign reporters that Kurdish rebels had ordered mass graves for 600 bodies to be dug in four different areas around al-Sulaymaniyah in mid-March.

Like other bulldozer drivers in the city, he had been forced to take part in digging the graves, Mr. Sharif said.

An Iraqi army captain, who declined to give his name, said the victims were mostly soldiers who had been guarding a military post in al-Sulaymaniyah and executed after the rebels seized the city on March 7.

Police officers and local officials were also among the dead, he said.

The operation to exhume the bodies started Tuesday, the captain said. Two hundred bodies were found Tuesday, another 200 on Wednesday, and 50 bodies early Thursday.

"One morning, the rebels sent our boss to look for me," said Mr. Sharif. "He took me to the police station where I found my colleagues. The bodies had been piled up for a week."

"The insurgents ordered us to go and bury them outside the town. We did it with bulldozers," he said.

Government troops officially recaptured al-Sulaymaniyah—450 kilometres (275 miles) northeast of Baghdad and 80 kilometres (50 miles) from the Iranian border—on April 2, after it had been under rebel control for 25 days.

Fighting Continues in Southern Cities

LD1104125191 Tehran IRNA in English 1104 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., April 10, IRNA—Clashes between the revolting Iraqi masses and Presidential Guards in southern cities of al-Basrah, al-'Amara and some Dhi Qar provincial cities still continue, an Iraqi refugee who arrived in this southern province Wednesday night told IRNA.

Sultan Muhammad Omar from southern Iraq added that the Iraqi forces demolish the houses killing those inside.

In al-Basrah Governorate, he explained, government forces brutally killed a seven-member family only because some anti-Saddam slogans had been written on the walls of their house. The house was levelled to ground afterward.

Omar added, 130 Iraqi soldiers have joined the popular forces in a district north of al-Basrah last Monday and Tuesday.

Another refugee, Kazem Ayyar Husayn of al-Basrah who took refuge with Iran on Wednesday told IRNA here that the Ba'thist forces are stationed in al-Basrah and are massacring the defenseless residents.

The Baghdad regime has hired foreign mercenaries disguised in Iraqi military uniforms for quelling the uprising, he said.

Refugees Suffering From 'Excessive Starvation'

LD1004192691 Tehran IRNA in English 1611 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Sanandaj (Kurdistan), April 10, IRNA—Excessive starvation forced a group of Kurdish refugees on the Iraqi side of the border in Baneh, to kill a boar and eat its forbidden flesh Tuesday night.

Islam forbids eating the flesh of boar and its related species, and the act of the famished Kurdish refugees, shows the misery that the Iraqi nation has suffered under the unpopular Ba'thist regime.

The refugees had eaten a dead donkey, and cut the trees and sucked their latex when coming to Iran last week.

Hunger, disease and the occasional strafing by Iraqi helicopters has increased the deaths among the Kurds trying hard to make it to the Iranian border through the arduous icy mountain paths.

There are no casualty figures available, but according to reports, on Tuesday alone, 30 more refugees died of cold weather, hunger or were drowned while trying to wade through rivers on the Iraqi side of the border.

Although Iran has not spared any help to the refugees, the sudden explosive rush of what seems to be the entire Iraqi nation towards the Islamic Republic, has created problems for the government which is finding it increasingly difficult to resolve the refugees' problems by itself.

Many of the 800,000 thousand Iraqi refugees in Iran, both Arabs and Kurds, are suffering from hunger and diseases, in addition to the wounds inflicted by the Ba'thist forces.

'Fabricated' Refugee Problem Part of Conspiracy

NC1104193991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1618 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] An important and essential fact is becoming clearer by the day and this is that the conspiracy against Iraq continues. Whenever the American-Atlantist-Zionist alliance finds that Iraq has foiled one chapter of its aggressive conspiracy, it opens a new one and begins creating pretexts and problems in a deliberate and premeditated manner. It attempts to pass additional unjust resolutions through the Security Council to undermine the sovereignty of great Iraq and destroy its people's will and their determination to rebuild and repair their country, deal with the effects of the aggression, and complete building their new democratic society.

By uprooting treason and sabotage and purging its north of strife, Iraq foiled all the hostile alliance's wagers on those traitors and adventurers, who had been implementing and continue to implement the plans of their masters in Washington, London, and the capitals of the other covetous foreign forces. It has become clear that the U.S., British, and French Administrations have been driven to desperation by the failure of their agents and mercenaries. They have all of a sudden become the protectors of the Iraqi Kurds and the defenders of their national and human rights. They insolently revealed their accumulated black hatred against Iraq and translated their wish to harm into further unjust resolutions and [word indistinct] proposals that are unprecedented in the history of the United Nations.

In order to exert further political and psychological pressure on Iraq and within the framework of a new episode whose purpose and objective is clear, the unjust UN Security Council Resolution No. 688 was issued and the suspect proposal for establishing a UN-controlled area inside Iraq was put forward to deal with the so-called refugee problem. Iraq emphatically rejects this illegal proposal which constitutes a flagrant violation of the principles of international law and is regarded as flagrant interference in its internal affairs. Iraq will resist it by all means, especially as it has taken all the necessary practical measures to solve this fabricated problem, as the prime minister has declared. A general amnesty has been announced, security and the supremacy of the law have been established in all parts of Iraq, including the northern area, and a large number of citizens have returned to their homes. There is nothing to prevent the remainder from returning after all towns and villages of the autonomous region [words indistinct] military activity in any part of Iraq.

It is futile for the United States, Britain, and France to try to don a humanitarian mask and pretend to assist the refugees. They will deceive no one. All the Iraqi people—Arabs, Kurds, and other minorities—are fully aware of the humanitarian feelings of those who imposed an economic blockade on them and who dropped hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs and missiles on them. Our Kurdish people will never forget who killed the Kurdish old people, women, and children in their shelters and residential neighborhoods. Those whose hands are dripping with the blood of innocent citizens cannot be [words indistinct] merely by throwing crumbs [words indistinct]. The racist propaganda exercised by the aggressors is aimed primarily at violating Iraq's sovereignty. All their aid will not wash out one drop of the blood of the martyrs who fell by the shells of their rancor and barbaric aggression against Iraq.

The important and clear fact, which is disregarded by the enemies, is that the Iraqi Kurds did not take refuge in Iran or Turkey willingly. The gangs of treason and sabotage forced them to proceed to the Iranian and Turkish borders by force of arms and threats in order to fabricate what is today called the refugee problem which the British and American masters have begun exploiting as part of their conspiracy scheme against Iraq. What other meaning can this ("unacceptable) British proposal have?

Before the UN Security Council adopted its unjust Resolution 688, Iraq called for the dispatch of a UN fact-finding committee that would familiarize itself with the true situation in northern Iraq. However, the United States, Britain, and France deliberately ignored this official Iraqi invitation, and the Security Council did not bother to hear Iraq's views.

Thus it becomes clear that what is called the refugee problem is nothing but a fabrication designed to defame Iraq and violate its sovereignty. There is no doubt that the imperialist-Zionist alliance is acting out of its sense of disappointment as a result of the failure of its wager on its agent rebels in the north and the failure of its wager on the blind sedition in the south. What Iraq's enemies have so far preferred not to understand is that all the chapters of their conspiracy scheme and its tools will not affect the tenacity of our great people and their firm determination to rebuild their homeland and repair the damage caused by the [words indistinct] aggression and to continue their victorious march to the future.

Editorial Assails U.S. Overflights, Kurdish Issue

NC1204085491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0715 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Apr (INA)—In an editorial today, the newspaper AL-QADISIYAH says that the double standard being perused by the United States and its allies, Britain and France, reveals their evil intent to make matters contradict their nature in order to accomplish the objectives of the imperialist conspiracy against Iraq.

The paper points out that this U.S.-Western double standard confirms the evil intent and persistence in continuing to weave the strings of conspiracy and interference in Iraq's domestic affairs without any regard for or respect of the laws governing international relations as well as the humanitarian traditions and norms.

This interference is manifested in the continuous U.S. warplanes' flights over Iraq even after the conclusion of the cease-fire agreement and after Iraq had been forced to approve the UN Security Council resolution which provides for arranging a permanent cease-fire.

Concluding its editorial, AL-QADISIYAH stresses that the United States will only reap from this behavior an increased hatred by the Arabs and the honorable people worldwide. The paper refers to the method of dealing with what the White House administration calls the Kurdish issue, although this administration realizes that the real Kurdish problem is not in Iraq but in Iran and Turkey, where oppression and coercion are practiced against them.

AL-JUMHURIYAH on Iraq's Solution to Arab Issues

NC1204091491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Apr (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH stresses in an editorial today that Iraq will favor any solution accepted by all Arabs that does not relinquish the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people led by their legitimate representative.

The paper says: Any political solution to the Palestinian problem which comes at a time when the Arab force is less influencing in the political domains must be an incomplete solution disregarding all the Arab rights. Such a solution is frail and unable to achieve the Arab aspirations, the paper adds.

AL-JUMHURIYAH explains that Iraq's proposed solution to all the Arab problems constitutes the ideal solution to the Palestinian issue. The paper points to the shuttle visits being carried out by U.S. officials and says that this demonstrates the U.S. hurry to resolve all issues in accordance with their double standard criterion in order to exploit the results of the Gulf war.

The paper affirms that the coming days will prove how wrong the calculations of the pro-U.S. Arabs were when they sided with Washington and Tel Aviv against Iraq and the heavy damage caused to the Arab nation's future as a result of this stand.

Opposition Backs Ex-Tunisian Human Rights Leader

LD1004140991 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 9 Apr 91

[From the "Arab and International Stands" feature]

[Text] The story of the man who challenged a town is well-known in the literature of all people. Ibsen wrote about it in his play "Enemy of the People." Egyptian playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim also narrated it in a different form in his play "The River of Madness." The story of the blind majority which tries to destroy the seeing minority feature in different forms in the literature of more than one people.

To fully understand what is happening these days to the President of the Tunisian Human Rights League, one cannot but return to that same theme, which repeated itself in Tunisia about a month ago and whose consequences are still interacting on more than one official and popular level inside a country which is living in a feverish and crucial battle of self-criticism and intensive soulsearching, touching on many sensitivities and revealing a dangerous state of intellectual terror practised by the Iraqi trumpets within the Tunisian information media who have the spirit of a wounded and defeated wolf.

Overnight, the kind doctor, Dr Moncef Marzouki, president of the Tunisian Human Rights League, became a criminal and a traitor who deserves to be abused by the

ugliest and nastiest names because he challenged that state of intellectual terror and called for a revision of all the stands taken by Tunisia during the Gulf crisis. He warned against the dangers inherent in the excessive defense of a dictator who has been crushing his people and uses the heavy weapons of his army for the destruction of his citizens.

With absolute simplicity and without any attempt at provocation, Dr Moncef Marzouki called on the information media of his country to report the facts and tell the citizens that the Mother of All Battles had become a Mother of All Defeats, instead of continuing to harp on the tune of nonexistent reports about imaginary victories that inflame the zeal of the misled masses who have fallen prey to the Iraqi trumpets inside the orchestra of the Tunisian information media in a manner that causes insult to the mind, cancels all logic, and transforms information from a means of knowledge into a means of slander.

These bold remarks made by a surgeon who believes in the language of the scalpel have touched a sensitive nerve in the body of the Tunisian people and their intellecutual vanguards.

The silent majority moved in response to what could be called an awakening of conscience, represented by Dr Moncef Marzouki in an article that appeared in copy No. 289 of the magazine REALITES [Tunisian French and Arabic language magazine] under the heading "Hope After the Agony." It sparked a storm of violent responses that went to the extent of demanding his resignation from the presidency of the Human Rights League and stripping him of his vocational and political rights.

In response to the agitated groups that refused to heed the voice of reason and called for silencing it, a large opposite current emerged that agreed with the ideas expressed by the president of the Human Rights League and insisted on keeping him in his position.

The Constitution of the Human Rights League does not provide for the expulsion of any member who condemns the Baghdad tyrant and his information trumpets. Those who spread the lies are the ones that should be brought to task and not the man who defends the right of the people to know the truth.

The supporters of the ideas of Dr Marzouki say: If there is really a need for a change within the executive body of the Human Rights League, then these changes must concentrate on the removal of those who embroiled themselves in calling for the use of chemical weapons on all fronts, thereby transforming the league, which toiled much to prove its credibility, from a league for the defense of human rights to a league for the defense of executioners' rights.

The storm sparked off by the article of the president of the Tunisian Human Rights League has exposed and bared the feebleness of the pro-Iraqi regime establishment and moved it from the position of offense to that of defense, after the facts have robbed them of the weapon of naming people as national traitors and of political charlatanry, which it used intensively during the months of the Gulf crisis. It discovered after emotions settled and minds rested that this weapon was no more than a comic wooden sword, and that one brave cry of truth has succeeded in perplexing the charlatans who carried the wooden sword and showed their metal and their inability to partake in any sound intellectual dialogue.

Islamic Oppositionists Discuss New Grouping

PM0904091091 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 3-9 Apr 91 pp 13-14

[Interview with Shaykh Mahdi al-Khalisi, leader of the Islamic movement in Iraq; Shaykh 'Ali Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, deputy general guide of the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan; Shaykh 'Abd-al-Latif al-Bazrani, aide to Shaykh 'Ali Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz; Shaykh Shamal Bin-al-Salih, a leader of the Islamic Bloc in Iraq; Shaykh Abu-'Abd-al-Rahman; and Abu-Zaynab al-Shahbandar, an Imam's Soldiers Movement leader, by 'Urubah Barakat in Beirut; date not given]

[Text] In response to the Iraqi regime's accusation that the people's uprising is sectarian and that the northern revolution is separated from the southern revolution, and to assert the Iraqi nationwide scale of the uprising spreading to all areas of Iraq without exception, four major Islamic opposition movements in Iraq have announced in Damascus the formation of the Iraqi Islamic Forces Grouping. The grouping comprises the Islamic Bloc in Iraq and the Islamic Movement in Iraq, the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan, and the Imam's Soldiers Movement.

In its first statement the grouping appealed to all world states to support the Iraqi people in their present uprising against the regime and to provide financial and material aid to the Iraqi opposition groups to enable them to forward it to the Iraqi people, who are threatened by famine, epidemics, and napalm.

AL-MAJALLAH interviewed representatives of the four movements. The interview was like a seminar. It dealt with most Iraqi concerns. Participants in the interview included Shaykh Mahdi al-Khalisi, grandson of Imam al-Khalisi, leader of the 1920 revolution, and leader of the Islamic Movement in Iraq; Shaykh 'Ali Bin-'Abda-al-'Aziz, deputy general guide of the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan; his aide Shaykh 'Abd-al-Latif al-Bazrani; and Shaykh Shamal Bin-al Salih, a leader of the Islamic Bloc in Iraq; Shaykh Abu-'Abd-al-Rahman; and Abu-Zaynab al-Shahbandar, an Imam's Soldiers movement leader.

Shaykh al-Khalisi started by talking about the Islamic opposition forces grouping, saying that the "grouping is not the result of the opposition's general conference or the people's uprising in Iraq. It is the fruit of major and continuing efforts by all Islamic movements in Iraq to pool their efforts and mobilize their grassroots to topple

the Saddam Husayn regime and then to unite Muslims of all sects. We have started practical steps to lay down the grouping's internal structure. We also appeal to the other religious movements in Iraq to join the grouping, whose aim is Iraq's unity.

[Barakat] The Joint Action Committee includes a number of Islamic parties and movements, some of which have joined the grouping. So why form a grouping within a grouping?

[Shaykh al-Khalisi] As is known, the Joint Action Committee of the Iraqi opposition forces includes various political and religious parties: some secular, some nationalist, and some religious. The coalition is an interim one until we topple the Saddam Husayn regime and replace it with a democratic regime in Iraq. In the Joint Action Committee we certainly have a clear program, but it focuses on the establishment of the Iraqi state after Saddam's downfall. But in the Islamic forces grouping we aim to form a strategic coalition between the Islamic forces in Iraq that will remain for a period after Saddam's downfall and not end after his downfall. [al-Khalisi ends]

Shaykh Abu-'Abd-al-Rahman added: There are other Islamic movements which have not had the opportunity to join the Joint Action Committee. They are influential, active, and leading movements on the Iraqi scene, such as the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan, and so on. The Islamic movements that have joined the Joint Action Committee are not all the influential movements on the Iraqi scene. So the grouping's aim is to include all Islamic parties and movements in Iraq in one grouping that has joint aims, joint working methods, and joint masses.

[Barakat] What are the aims of the grouping of the Islamic opposition forces in Iraq?

[Shaykh Shamal] The most important aim which the group is seeking to achieve is to unite the Islamic forces in Iraq within a unified action framework that includes all groups of the Iraqi people: Arab, Kurdish, and Turkman Muslims—both Shiites and Sunnis. That framework is based on the historic roots of the struggle and unity of the Iraqi people, who participated in building Iraq and liberating it from imperialism. It was that unity which aborted Colonel Wilson's scheme to divide Iraq into three states after the British occupation.

[Shaykh 'Abd-al-Latif] We hope that our unity will be the axis of Iraq's unity in the future in order to confront whoever thinks about partitioning Iraq or abandoning the unity of his noble Muslim people.

[Shaykh al-Khalisi] Our comprehensive Islamic program transcends the nationalist program, which separates the Kurds or the Turkmen, in order to unite Muslims in Iraq. It is also based on God's Book and the Sunnah of His noble messenger regarding the shura in government. We support the democratic option for Iraq's future and support whoever the Iraqi people choose to rule. This, despite our belief that the Iraqi people's Islamic tendency is much deeper than all the other political tendencies formed. In this regard the Iraqis are no different from any of the other Islamic world's peoples.

[Shaykh Abu-'Abd-al-Rahman] The Islamic tendency has become substantial throughout the Islamic world. This does not mean that we impose our position on the others or regard ourselves as the only alternative for power in Iraq. On the contrary, we support the parties and tendencies opposed to Saddam. And we declare our commitment to the Joint Action Committee's action program. We also declare our firm support for the resolutions adopted by the Iraqi opposition forces' general conference. So we are working through the committee primarily to intensify efforts to salvage the Iraqi people.

We want to emphasize to the world through the grouping that the Iraqi people are not sectarian, nor is their uprising sectarian or nationalist. It is the revolution of whoever rejects humiliation.

[Barakat] Iraqi religious movements reportedly disagree about some Iraqi religious parties' relations with Iran. What truth is there in this?

[Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz] All Iraqi opposition forces, including all Islamic movements, have very cordial relations with Iran and wish to strengthen these relations further.

[Shaykh Shamal] We and all Iraqi Islamic movements greatly welcome the restoration of fraternal relations between Iran and the other Arab states, especially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

We hope that this step will be a good impulse for Muslims throughout the world.

[Barakat] The West still regards all religious movements anxiously, on the basis of its experience with the Islamic revolution in Iran. What is your opinion?

[Shaykh al-Khalisi] The Western world is still experiencing its own psychological dilemma, which it created. It knows nothing about Islam except its extremist aspects. Despite its broad knowledge and education, the Western world still does not know that Islam is a religion of love, justice, and peace, and that it has an abundance of values. That is the West's problem. It has not seriously tried to build genuine bridges with Muslims in order to understand their religion and explore their culture. As for the West's experience with Iran, it should be taken as an example. Because, as has been discovered, every nation has its own circumstances that govern its march and alliances.

We call on the West to build genuine bridges of understanding with the Islamic world, not just bridges of economic and political interests.

[Barakat] Do you believe that the new world order is prepared to allow a religious authority to assume power in Iraq to the exclusion of another?

[Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz] We do not want power in Iraq to be held by a single group. We emphasize the need for all groups to be represented in power. We believe that there can be no future for Iraq in isolation from democracy and party pluralism. In this stage all must agree on a single formula in which all Iraqi opposition tendencies and parties are represented.

[Abu-Zaynab] We do not rule out the existence of other parties that do not want to topple Saddam Husayn, on the basis of the suspicion that the Iraqi Islamic movement is an Iranian movement, because in the past 10 years it has made its moves from the Iranian arena, since that it is the only arena that received the Iraqi opposition. This, in the knowledge that the people's uprising in Iraq is purely an Iraqi revolution that has no particular political orientation and includes all groups of the Iraqi people. And the Islamic movement in Iraq is Iraqi, understands Islam in its own way, adopts the political position that proceeds from its own character, and seeks nothing except to allow the Iraqi people to achieve their aims, whether by toppling the Saddam regime or by choosing the authority that suits them and fulfills their aspirations and aims.

[Barakat] What are your strategic orientations through your political action program for Iraq's future after Saddam's downfall?

[Shaykh Shamal] The aim of the Islamic Bloc in Iraq is to establish God's law and the Sunnah of His messenger, peace be upon him. And also to derive legitimate evidence and decisive criteria from God's Book and the Sunnah of His messenger and to unite Muslims, both Sunnis and Shiites, in Iraq. We are the only Islamic movement in the Joint Action Committee which represents both the Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq.

[Abu-Zaynab] The Imam's Soldiers Movement is basically an Islamic, intellectual, ideological movement. It has adopted three slogans for the post Saddam period: peace, freedom, and rebuilding.

Peace is now Iraq's problem. Saddam has deprived Iraq, the Iraqis, and the region's peoples of peace.

Freedom is now more important than food in Iraq after many years during which freedoms have been confiscated and suppressed.

As for rebuilding, Iraq today is totally devastated, and the opposition's task after assuming power in Iraq is to build what the war has destroyed and what Saddam has destroyed and continues to destroy today.

[Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz] Our movement's most important aims are to fight oppression and corruption and to establish justice and equality in Iraq, especially for the persecuted Kurdish people. And also to realize Arab-Kurdish brotherhood and establish an independent, just, peaceful Islamic state. We seek to realize an Islamic state in Iraq in accordance with God's Book and the Sunnah of His noble messenger. Nevertheless, we demand a democratic system and political and social freedom. If freedom prevails among people, they will choose Islam, because they are Muslim by nature. And Islam forces no one to embrace the religion, in accordance with His Almighty's words: "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error." [Koranic verse]

[Muhammad Jawwad al-Kazimi] The Islamic Movement in Iraq is an old and deep-rooted movement. It fought British imperialism under its great leader the late Muhammad al-Khalisi. Then it continued to promote Islam and establish God's law in all political, social, and economic matters until the February 1963 Ba'thist coup, which fought all groups of the Iraqi people, especially ulema. Our movement calls for the unity of Iraqis of all groups and national, political, and ideological leanings, including the Sunnis, Shiites, Arabs, Kurds, and Turkmens.

We call for the unity of Muslims in Iraq and the formation of a provisional coalition government representing all political tendencies, to be followed by free elections, in order to enable the Iraqi people to choose whomever they deem suitable to rule them.

Levi: 'No Argument' on Palestinian Delegation

TA1104183591 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by Eli Nisan in Levi's office in Jerusalem on 11 April—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Levi] Anyone spreading such rumors [about differences of opinion between Levi and the prime minister on the makeup of the Palestinian delegation] probably wants to confuse the public. This is called disinformation. In our talks, we enjoy full coordination. By the way, I did not tell Baker—and the prime minister certainly did not; Baker told me so—that Israel does not object to a Palestinian delegation composed of representatives of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza who accept the Israeli initiative as it is. [sentence as heard] In the future, we will have to discuss and agree on the names—that stage has not been reached yet. But we say no to the PLO, and this Israeli attitude is acceptable to the Americans. In addition, the previous demands for the inclusion of a Palestinian from exile or from East Jerusalem no longer exist. Therefore, Israel agrees to such a delegation. There is no argument between me and the prime minister. As for participation in a regional conference, it would be preferable if the delegation were in a Jordanian framework, and Israel has stated as much. Baker will probe this point in talks with the Jordanian people, and we will be apprised of the answer.

Thus, there has been no argument whatsoever. There are some who have analyzed the issue in a subjective way, deliberately trying to show that an argument exists. Perhaps some people have changed their minds. If they have changed their minds, they had better say so as soon as possible, in order to avert a crisis with the United States. As for myself, I have not heard about any objection to a Palestinian delegation composed of representatives from Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza in accordance with the rules, demands, and agreements I have mentioned.

[Nisan] Would not an independent delegation imply independence in the sense of the Arab demands regarding a Palestinian state?

[Levi] No, no, no—because, first of all, both we and the Americans agree that the discussions do not aim at a Palestinian state. That point should be stated plainly. The discussions will be held in accordance with the Israeli initiative as it is. That is the basis for discussions.

[Nisan] Mr. Levi, Syria has announced that it rejects the notion of a regional conference. Do you believe that Baker will manage to bring Syria to the negotiating table in the current round of talks?

[Levi] We and the Americans have reached agreements and favorable accord on formerly tough issues. If those issues remained unresolved, I myself would oppose the initiative. I spoke with Mr. Baker as a constraints minister. I told him: A constraints minister is talking to you. When the land mines existed, I opposed the initiative. Since those land mines have been removed, I am in favor of the initiative and in favor of peace. The agreements and Israel's affirmative answer all show that Israel desires peace, as indeed it does. That is Israel's policy: to promote peace without endangering its security and vital interests. The world has already responded favorably to our attitude.

If the Arab countries, or one of them, reject the initiative, that will be proof that they do not want peace. In any event, the ball is now in the Arab court. I hope that Mr. Baker will be able to convince them and that we will at last embark on the path of hope and peace.

No Process Without Accord on Palestinians

TA1104155191 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Our correspondent Arye Golan provides more details on what was said on the issue of the Palestinian delegation in the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs. Minister Levi said that without an agreement on a Palestinian delegation there is no peace process. If somebody has now decided to change his mind, he should say so immediately to prevent a crisis in our relations with the United States and any harm to the peace process, Levi said. He said Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir did not tell Baker that Israel opposes a separate Palestinian delegation from Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip that would accept the May 1989 Israeli peace initiative. Our political correspondent reports that in the meeting, Levi stressed that without agreement on a Palestinian delegation there is no peace process.

The prime minister's bureau says that no differences cropped up between the prime minister and the foreign minister. The form the Palestinian participation would take in the process has not yet been decided on, the bureau's announcement said.

Sharon 'In the Dark' on Baker-Shamir Talks

TA1204052991 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Telephone interview with Ari'el Sharon, construction and housing minister, by political correspondent Arye Golan—live]

[text] [Golan] Good morning, Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon.

[Sharon] Good morning.

[Golan] Minister Sharon, yesterday at the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs session you and your fellow committee members heard detailed reports from Prime Minister Shamir, Foreign Minister Levi, and Defense Minister Arens on the talks they held with Baker. What Palestinian delegation are we prepared to

talk to in the final analysis: one that is independent and separate, or a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation?"

[Sharon] First of all, it is important to reach peace; it is important to talk to the Arabs. If a meeting takes place, that will be a good thing, but naturally the important thing is not the mechanism of the meeting itself but the content. Here the situation is somewhat different.

And now, to your question: I admit that it is hard for me to tell right now because I am actually not sure what was discussed. Yesterday morning, for example, when I heard about the prime minister's position as presented by the radio on the news, and later when I heard him in person, I got the impression that there is indeed a positive change in Israel's position in that it is prepared to hold talks with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, which is to say a delegation that represents the Palestinian state which already exists, namely Jordan, rather than with a separate delegation. Later, however, in the course of the session, it turned out that either the Americans were told different things during Baker's visit, indicating an argument among the negotiating team—and this is a very small team—or we were not told the truth.

In actual fact, we are in the dark. A strange situation has occurred where al-Qadhdhafi knows, his friend Mubarak updated him; the Egyptians know; Syria's al-Asad knows; the Jordanians will learn today; and only we, who will have to bear the consequences—and I believe that if this is how the negotiations are being conducted, if this is the situation, then the consequences are going to be severe—we are the only ones who have not been informed properly.

[Golan] Are you implying that this obfuscation is intentional? Is someone deliberately trying to withhold some information from the most senior members of the cabinet?

[Sharon] I would not like to go into this issue, nor do I think it important. To me, only one thing is important. We have reached the moment of truth right now, in fact we have achieved a discussion of something that we have all desired for many years, and that is reaching peace. Yet as this most vital and crucial business is being dealt with, we hear about different positions that are being presented to the Americans, and we do not actually know what the Americans have been told. I do not believe that this is the way to hold serious negotiations. This cannot be serious, because it is inconceivable that a small forum of ministers, in a country facing the toughest questions, will be put in a situation in which it does not, to this very moment, know what we actually want. I have often emphasized that Israel has never decided on the move it wants to pursue or what it wants at the end of the process—which in itself is a gross error, clearing the way for all those mistakes that are already being made in the early stages of the moves.

[Golan] Minister Sharon, you are talking about an important moment. Baker said that it is a not a good thing, at this moment, to pursue the settlement momentum in the territories. We also heard on the news that Baker promised President Mubarak to pressure Israel on that issue. Perhaps for the sake of that important moment you will be prepared to reconsider the issue of settlements at the current time so as not to impede the peace process?

[Sharon] A strange situation has been created. What do you mean by "Are you prepared to reconsider"? It is the government that should reconsider, if it so desires. After all, everything that takes place in the area is done with its full knowledge and follows its basic guidelines. The government....

[Golan, interrupting] But you are the one who implements.

[Sharon] Excuse me: The health minister implements decisions in the hospitals; what is done in the security sphere—where I have a lot of reservations—is being performed by the defense minister. Everyone has his own area of jurisdiction, but the responsibility is shared by the entire cabinet. The prime minister fully shares responsibility in this issue. When the initial reports on what Baker said came in, I found it hard to believe that he actually said that, because it was clear to me that if such a statement had been made, the prime minister would certainly have refuted these contentions at once. Could anyone imagine, for instance, that an Israeli foreign minister would travel to Washington for a meeting with President Bush to express his views or dismay over the ongoing massacre of the Kurds even as American troops are in that area and can control the entire scene and yet are not preventing the killings? Suppose that minister made a personal accusation against, let us say, the secretary of defense or the secretary of state. I am convinced that if that were the case, President Bush would hush him up then and there, as there is a limit to intervention. That is why I find such things difficult to credit, because I believe that Prime Minister Shamir, too, if he indeed had heard such statements, no doubt would have cut him short.

[Golan] Minister Sharon, one final question: Even after the detailed reports you were given about the talks with Baker, I understand that you still want to convoke the Likud Central Committee?

[Sharon] I believe it is important to convoke the political bodies which we represent, in this case the Likud Central Committee. There are many issues to discuss, primarily the fundamental one where either the negotiating team is split, or we were not given the whole truth yesterday at the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs. I cannot tell. In any case, there are very central issues. For example: Do we hold talks with the Palestinian state of Jordan, or are we going to talk to a Palestinian delegation from Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza—thereby in fact actually creating the second Palestinian political entity, which is to say we are starting the process of setting up the second Palestinian state. This is a very

substantial issue. There is also another question: Should we not have introduced the most critical Middle East issue at the present, namely the arms race? People now talk about confidence-building measures. The first and perhaps most important step is to limit the mad arms race in which the Arab countries in the Middle East are currently engaged. Yet nothing has been said about this.

I also foresee a lot of dangers in the fact that serious matters have been left for the end of the process. This is a mistake. The end of the process is when concessions are demanded and are made because it is too late to stop. All of this must definitely be discussed, and it is good that these issues will be discussed. What happened yesterday at the session—and I would not say this if matters had not been reported anyway—merely demonstrates the necessity for, first of all, democratic processes in the government and the ministerial forum, where the most vital issues should be discussed—but the members of these forums, or actually all of us, should not be duped, and it also shows the need for things to be summed up so that we are properly prepared to reach the peace we so desire.

[Golan] Minister Sharon, thank you very much.

Sources React to Sharon Charges

TA1204054391 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] In reaction to Sharon's remarks this morning, political circles in Jerusalem said that Sharon is trying to slant the reality, as he knows very well that there is no dispute. The Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs was fully briefed yesterday, and Minister Sharon knows that the United States adopted all of Israel's demands in connection with the political process. It is now necessary to persuade the Arab side, emphasized the political sources.

Qatzav on Jordanian-Palestinian Delegation

TA1104160491 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1400 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Interview with Transportation Minister Moshe Qatzav by Dan Margalit—live]

[Text] [Margalit] In the studio is Moshe Qatzav, a member of the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs and the transportation minister. Good evening.

[Qatzav] Good evening.

[Margalit] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir says yes only to a Jordanian-Palestinian team, the foreign minister says yes to the Palestinians who come separately, based on a commitment we have made. Which of the two versions is acceptable to you?

[Qatzav] There is only one version, that of the government, there are not two versions. The government's position, as you know, is now being discussed by the U.S. secretary of state in his trips to Damascus, Cairo, and other capitals. The government position is that it must be a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

[Margalit] That means that the foreign minister is mistaken?

[Qatzav] You did not hear the foreign minister. I am talking about the government's stand, which is that in the regional meeting that will be held with representatives of the countries in the region, representatives from Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip will be part of the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

[Margalit] How can that possibly be the only position of the government, when it officially—and with Knesset approval—proposed in May 1989 that there be elections and that there be an independent Palestinian delegation from the territories?

[Qatzav] Look what happens when we deal with shuttles and almost open negotiations. We have for some time claimed that an open international conference will not bring about anything positive, because difficulties would surface immediately. We need a Camp David-style conference, to convene for a closed discussion for two, three weeks, or a month or two. We will thrash out our differences until we reach some final solution. That is the government's position right now; that is our demand. The U.S. secretary of state is currently bringing that position to the Arab states. He will return here if his mission has positive results. What I have presented, however, is the government's position.

[Margalit] In other words, that is a development on the way to peace, but it is also a change in the government's position since the May 1989 proposal was first raised.

[Qatzav] No, in May 1989 Jordan was not in the picture. The situation was completely different then. We are now talking about developments that we believe have the ability.... [changes thought] We have an interest in Jordan's—with which we share our longest border—being a partner to the negotiating process. Do not forget that while our aim is to reach a settlement with the Palestinians, our larger and more important aim is peace with the Arab states. Jordan has the longest border with us, and we have an interest in it representing a joint delegation. We do not talk about either a Jordanian or a Palestinian delegation, we say a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

By the way, I do not give too much importance to that issue because in the final analysis we are talking about bilateral talks. There will be an opening, the sides will say what they have to say, and after that we will convene not for multilateral negotiations, but direct bilateral negotiations. Each side, therefore, will be able to present its positions. We will obviously have to discuss autonomy with the Palestinians. That is the basis for the arrangement we are going to propose to them. In reference to the news just reported about the Iraqi massacre of the

Kurds, what is the massacre about? All they want is autonomy, which Israel is willing to grant the Palestinians with relative ease.

[Margalit] Was the position on a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, the readiness for an opening under the aegis of the two superpowers, and talks with the Arab states agreed upon in the secret mission Dan Meridor undertook in the United States?

[Qatzav] I am presently presenting the government's position, which James Baker is taking to the Arab states. That is our position. The processes leading up to it are unimportant. We believe that our proposal, our additional initiative.... [changes thought] Until now everybody has expected only Israel to present positions and initiatives, and there have been no initiatives from the Arab states. All the initiatives up to now were rejected by the Arab states. We are currently presenting an initiative; we hope that it will be accepted and that the Arab states will not reject it. We have an interest in advancing that process. At the moment we are awaiting an Arab acceptance.

[Margalit] Israel's contribution to the political process, whether in the wake of Meridor's trip or as a result of things worked out here, caused Minister Ari'el Sharon to demand a meeting of the Likud Central Committee. It appears that he does not agree with what is going on. Do you believe there is room to convene the Central Committee to discuss the latest political developments?

[Qatzav] It is certainly positive and useful to convene the Likud Central Committee—it sent the Likud representatives to the cabinet and the Knesset—unless there is a wish to ask the Central Committee to approve the proposals presented to Baker; there is no need for that. When the Central Committee approved....

[Margalit, interrupting] Then why convene the Central Committee if not to approve or reject the government's new position?

[Qatzav] If you say that the Central Committee has to approve the Israeli Government's proposal to the Arabs, then for that we do not need the Central Committee. It has already approved the proposal. When it approved our initiative in May 1989, it also approved the plan being presented today. The plan, as presented today to the Arabs by Baker, is in fact identical to the May 1989 plan, and is based on the Camp David accords, so that there is no deviation from the Likud Central Committee's resolutions.

[Margalit] In that case, Sharon's proposal should not be accepted.

[Qatzav] It is good to convene the Likud Central Committee in order to conduct a political debate, because it is the supreme body that sent our representatives to the cabinet and the Knesset. It is good from time to time to convene it and for it to conduct a political debate. That is certainly justified.

Labor To Back Shamir Against 'Radical Ministers'

TA1204095991 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 12 Apr 91 p 20

[Report by political correspondent Michal Yudelman]

[Text] The Labor Party will support Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir against the radical ministers in his cabinet as long as he advances the peace process, Labor Secretary General Mikha Harish said yesterday. Speaking at the meeting of the party's Political Bureau, Harish also said that he had grave doubts about "the radical right-wing government's ability to lead the peace process." He also warned that if Shamir adopted the radical line espoused by Ministers Ari'el Sharon (Likud) and Rehav'am Ze'evi (Moledet), Labor would wage all-out war against him.

Harish reminded Shamir that it was Labor, as opposition party, which supported when then prime minister Menahem Begin presented to the Knesset the peace accords with Egypt in 1979, against the opposition of members of his coalition, one of whom was Shamir. Today, Shamir is adopting Labor's principles concerning the peace process, though under different names, such as a "regional conference" instead of an "international conference." Even when both Labor and the Likud were partners in the national unity government, Shamir sabotaged his own government's initiative with the help of the "constraints ministers," Harish said.

Shamir does not now intend convening the Likud Central Committee, despite Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon's demand that the committee be summoned immediately to discuss issues raised by Secretary of State James Baker during his visit earlier this week, sources in the premier's office told THE JERUSALEM POST yesterday.

The chairman of the Likud secretariat, Minister Moshe Arens, decided yesterday not to lodge an appeal against the High Court decision that the Likud Convention must meet within a year. He decided to have the Convention meet in January. The court ruled last month that the Likud must call together a new convention, consisting of elected Herut-Liberal members, by next March. If not, the present Central Committee would no longer have legal existence. Arens also asked the chairman of the Likud's organization division, MK [Knesset Member] Re'uven Rivlin, to act to unite the Herut and Liberal wings of the party by May in order to implement the Herut-Liberals merger agreement.

Palestinian Journalist Abu-'Ayyash Released

TA1204074091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0730 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, chairman of the Palestinian Journalists Association in the territories, was released from Nabulus Prison today at the end of five months of administrative detention. Our correspondent

in the territories Udi Segal reports that Faysal al-Husayni from East Jerusalem and Ahmad al-Tibi from al-Tayyibah, along with a delegation of Arabs from Israel and the territories, waited for Abu-'Ayyash at the prison gates. Abu- 'Ayyash's term was shortened by one month following his appeal to the Nabulus Military Court.

Views Regional Peace Talks

TA1204105691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Report by territories correspondent Udi Segal; passages within quotation marks recorded in English]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, who was released from Junayd Prison this morning, was received by Faysal al-Husayni, Bassam al-Sa'ih, Ahmad al-Tibi, and a delegation of Arab notables from Israel and the territories.

Abu-'Ayyash, who had been cut off from the political arena, takes a favorable view of the meetings with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker:

[Abu-'Ayyash] "I think any move that will lead to concrete solution and put an end for our problem will be welcome. Palestinians will lose nothing if they meet with anybody and talk about peace."

He stressed: We must consider every step we make carefully and favorably. He takes a similar approach to the matter of municipal elections: It should be probed carefully, he says.

As for the regional conference concept presented by James Baker, he says that the idea should be examined only as part of an international conference.

[Abu-'Ayyash] "I did not know the details yet. What does it mean, the regional conference? If it is part of the international conference, I think it deserves studying deeply, and I think it is very important for Palestinians to deal with matters positively because, as I told you, we are not going to lose anything."

He stresses that the nonrepresentation of East Jerusalem residents, which was agreed between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Foreign Minister David Levi, is unacceptable to the Palestinians. He says that in the upcoming days, he will consult with his associates in the East Jerusalem leadership. He will travel abroad and hold meetings there only if they promote the peace process and show concrete results.

All Planes Return From Air Raid in Lebanon

TA1204131291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] IAF [Israel Air Force] planes this afternoon attacked a terrorist target approximately 15 km east of Sidon. The target was hit, and all our planes returned safely to base. Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the target was used as a staging point for terrorist raids.

Correspondents reporting in southern Lebanon said that IAF aircraft fired 12 rockets at a base belonging to the Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] organization near al-Salihiyah.

Air Force To Aid Kurds on Turkish Border

TA1204110791 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 12 Apr p 1

[Report by defense correspondent Bradley Burston and news agencies]

[Excerpts] Tel Aviv—An IAF [Israel Air Force] transport plane is to begin flying medical equipment, clothing, and blankets to Kurdish refugees on the Turkish border on Sunday, under a directive issued yesterday by Defense Minister Moshe Arens.

The Health Ministry has budgeted $10 million for the relief effort, with the Defense and Foreign ministries each contributing $7m. The logistics of the operation are being coordinated by Magen David Adom [MDA, medical emergency services]. [passage omitted]

The IAF transport is scheduled to fly the supplies to an airstrip in southeastern Turkey, where tens of thousands of Kurds have taken refuge after fleeing Iraq.

According to Dan Arnon, director of MDA's International Department, the Turkish Red Crescent Society has agreed to handle distribution of the supplies among the Kurdish refugees.

Of particular concern to health officials is the outbreak of infectious diseases in the refugee compounds. The shipment will include quantities of drugs to treat digestive, respiratory and skin diseases.

MDA will also be responsible for the delivery of supplies assembled by the grass-roots Kurdish aid committee headed by Brig.-Gen. (res.) Avigdor Kahalani.

Shamir To Meet USSR's Pavlov in London

TA1204074691 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 12 Apr 91 p 11

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is to meet early next week in London with Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov. It will be the first meeting between government leaders of the two countries. Shamir's agreement that the USSR participate in providing auspices for a regional meeting will not be the main issue under discussion. Shamir will also meet in London with the presidents of Czechoslovakia and Romania, as well as the British prime minister.

Shamir will be among 30 European heads of state who will come for the inauguration of the European Bank for Rehabilitation and Investment, which will invest in

development in East and Central European countries. Israel has allocated $90 million for the project.

Palestinian Reactions to Election Plan Reported

Said Preparing for Elections

LD0704101491 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 7 Apr 91 p 3

[Report by Yoram Binur]

[Text] Sources in the territories have reported that if Palestinian leaders meet James Baker this week, the list of participants would be different than those at the previous meeting. "It is impossible for every meeting with foreign diplomats to be attended by the same people. That could create the wrong impression that this is the only leadership," they said.

In response to the U.S. proposal to set up a Palestinian government instead of autonomy [as published], elements in the territories have decided to promote the issue of elections. In coordination with the PLO, those elements are trying to construct a formula that would lead to elections in the territories soon.

According to the plans, the PLO in Tunis will publicly announce its agreement to holding elections. Lists of candidates will then be presented, a date will be set, and an external element will be invited to supervise the elections. One of the candidates named is former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

The sources—who are aware that Israel and probably the United States oppose this plan—said that with the help of well-timed resolutions in Tunis, the territories, and UN organizations, they could "push Israel into a corner" and prevent the plan from being foiled.

Gazans Oppose Plans, Delegation's Trip

LD0704092591 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Apr 91 pp AL, 6

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Yizhar Be'er and Eytan Rabin]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Senior Palestinian activists from the Gaza Strip last weekend rejected the proposal to hold municipal elections in Gaza City. They claimed that they are not rejecting the principle of elections, but only the link they believe has been created between the idea of municipal elections and the efforts to create an alternative leadership to the PLO.

These remarks were made in interviews, published in the Nazareth Arabic daily AL-ITTIHAD, with Furayh Abu-Mudayn, Gaza Bar Association chairman; Dr. Zakariyya al-'Ara, Engineers Association chairman [name and title as published]; Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Gaza Red Crescent branch; and other physicians, engineers, and lawyers.

According to them, the situation is similar to that created when heads of city councils were elected in the West Bank in 1976. "Any acceptance of the idea of local elections is tantamount to an agreement to Israel's plans," some of them said. They claimed that the trip to Egypt of the three-man Gaza delegation headed by attorney Fayiz Abu-Rahmah came at an inappropriate time because of "the poisonous campaign against the PLO, the sole representative of the Palestinian people, and attempts by certain Arab regimes to establish direct links with the territories while bypassing the PLO.

"What the Palestinians need now is to avoid being distracted from the main goal—solving the problem of the Israeli occupation, and the need to do so on the basis of international legitimacy. Elections of any kind could come in the framework of an overall solution of the Palestinian problem, and under international guarantees that would remove all threats."

Similar things were said in a leaflet disseminated over the weekend in the Gaza Strip by the Unified National Command of the Uprising: "Those who think about holding municipal elections must remember what happened in the West Bank in 1976: Mayors were murdered and expelled, and later the Jewish underground was established. Everyone must remember that such elections are but one means to try and suppress the intifadah.

"There are those who, in the framework of the attacks against the Palestinian people, take advantage of our people's suffering. They must realize that no money of Arab monarchs, nor apartments and dozens of development projects, can distance the Palestinian people from its adherence to the PLO."

The leaflet calls the delegation to Egypt "the cavalry of the U.S. and Egyptian Embassies," and calls on them to go back home.

Tulkarm Mayor Backs Municipal Elections

LD0904114291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Report by territories correspondent Udi Segal]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Yesterday Tulkarm Mayor Hilmi Hanun, who is an elected mayor, declared that he supports municipal elections. Today he met with Brigadier General Gadi Zohar, head of the Judaea and Samaria Civil Administration. Sources in Tulkarm told us that Gen. Zohar said that he would support steps toward such elections in the city in the future, although with certain restrictions. [passage omitted]

Official Says PLO Aid to Arab Sector Ceases

LD1204094091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Government officials dealing with the Arab sector have confirmed reports that the PLO has cut off aid to

Israeli Arabs. Alex Bligh, the prime minister's adviser on Arab affairs, said in reaction that he welcomes the stoppage of assistance coming in outside acceptable channels.

Our correspondent Yo'el Dar that in the past few years more than 100 organizations, institutions, local publications, and individuals in the Arab sectors have benefited from this assistance.

Housing, Immigration Plans for Territories Reported

Construction for Immigrants Picking Up

TA1004112291 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 10 Apr 91 p 3

[Report by Tzvi Singer]

[Text] Despite the Housing Ministry's contentions that no construction especially designed for new immigrants is under way in the territories, some internal documents recently drafted by a high-level ministry official reveal that the Housing Ministry is speeding up construction work with the explicit purpose of settling immigrants in those areas.

Knesset Member [MK] Charlie Biton obtained the documents yesterday. A document written about two weeks ago, on 26 March, by Hayim Zimmer, the ministry official in charge of public institutions and complementary development in the Central District, details building plans for public areas and public institutions in Ari'el West, where 1,000 housing units are scheduled to be built.

At the bottom of the document there is a handwritten remark which says, among other things: **"Background information compiled due to the urgent need to build houses for immigrants."**

Another document dealing with the settlement of Tzofim in the West Bank was written on 14 February. It is entitled: "Program Update—Public Areas and Public Institutions, 2,000 Housing Units." At the bottom of this document, too, there is a handwritten remark which explicitly shows that the original building plans have been expanded to allow for the absorption of new immigrants in Tzofim. The remark states: "There is a program for 1,200 housing units from 10 December 1987, but in view of the acquisition of additional land and increasing crowdedness, it is necessary to update the program to 2,000 housing units. **Update made due to the urgent need to build houses for immigrants."**

Following the disclosure of the documents, MK Biton yesterday sent a letter to Foreign Minister David Levi in which he accuses Minister Sharon of sabotaging Levi's work.

In reaction, it has been learned from the office of the Housing and Construction Ministry's spokesman that Sharon constantly urges ministry staffers to speed up all procedures related to the construction momentum throughout the country. The spokesman's office also noted that the sentence "update made due to the urgent need to build houses for immigrants" is added to documents on a routine basis, "regardless of the location of the construction work or the subject of the document." The staffer who wrote these remarks thought this would earn him greater attention and speedier processing. He has been reprimanded.

Three Percent of Immigrants in Territories

TA1104093891 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 11 Apr 91 p 11

[Report by Lili Galili]

[Text] During the two years beginning in January 1989, 7,051 new immigrants chose to reside beyond the Green Line. Of them, 5,676 live in the neighborhoods surrounding Jerusalem—Ramot, Gilo, and Pisgat Ze'ev—and 1,375 in the territories.

All in all, three percent of the 223,000 new immigrants who came to Israel during that period chose to settle beyond the Green Line. New immigrants in those areas total 0.61 percent of the population. The immigrants' preference for large urban settlements was evident also among those who chose to live in the territories.

Several weeks ago, representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Israel approached the Jewish Agency and obtained the updated statistics on immigrants who have settled in the territories. In view of the fact that only a few immigrants have arrived in Israel since the Gulf war, the ratio of new immigrants residing in those areas has not changed by much.

Three New Settlements To Be Established

TA1080414269l Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 8 Apr 91 p 11

[Report by Rahamim Ya'aqov]

[Text] Three new groups are getting ready to move to Judaea and Samaria and establish the new settlements of Revava, Qatzif, and Gilgalit.

The groups are being organized by Amana, Gush Emunim's settlement movement. The group that will settle in Revava plans to move to the site on Independence Day next week [18 April].

Revava will be established near Kafr Haris, between the settlement of Yaqir and the trans-Samaria road junction. The area has been approved for settlement by all the incumbent settlement authorities and is described as state-owned land.

Qatzif will be located east of the settlement of Shilo, on what is described as state-owned land.

Gilgalit will be located east of Shilo. Hagay Salomon, head of the group slated for Gilgalit, said it consists of

five families and 15 single people who "are not getting worked up about Baker's visit," and added that "all the activities are legal."

Construction in Settlements Detailed

TA0804113691 Tel Aviv YEDIOT AHARONOT in Hebrew 8 Apr 91 p 17

[Report by Yotam Navin and Tzvi Singer]

[Text] About six months ago, Construction and Housing Ministry officials initiated a weekly report called "The Administration of Construction for Immigrants." The 50-page report contains detailed and updated information on the rate of construction for immigrants throughout the country. It includes the number of mobile homes, campers, and permanent housing units built in every town and rural settlement, as well as information on the pace of development works and the dates on which new neighborhoods are to be inaugurated.

About a month ago, a copy of this internal document reached CRM [Citizens Rights Movement] Knesset Members [MK's] Dedi Zucker and Hayim Oron. The two, who hastened to peruse the chapter dealing with the pace of construction projects in various settlements, were amazed by the data. The information, which detailed the scope of building in the territories, exceeded every previous report by far. They found out that the amounts invested in the territories in fiscal 1990-91, which stood at over 1.1 billion shekels, constituted over 20 percent of the entire Construction and Housing Ministry's budget. In addition, the tempo of the work seemed extraordinary. "Apparently, there is no idle talk or bureaucracy in the territories. Every decision is implemented at once, and the pace is even quicker than planned," said the two MK's.

Minister Sharon fumed at the disclosure of the internal data. A week later, the two MK's again managed to lay their hands on a copy of the voluminous report. This time, however, the report was differently structured. Missing were the details regarding the state of construction in the territories, which reappeared in the report—along with additional townships—under a heading entitled "Other Locations." MK Zucker said yesterday that Minister Sharon is endangering the future of aliyah with his own two hands.

The Construction and Housing Ministry, under Minister Sharon's command, is planning to build 12,000 new housing units in the territories over the next three years. These units will house about 50,000 settlers. Most of the building is in older settlements, whose area will be doubled, tripled, or more. By bolstering the existing settlements, the government will be able to flaunt the argument that "no new settlements are being established." The government believes that this explanation will sound reasonable and convenient to the American ear. In addition, there is an intention to build settlements sprawling across both sides of the Green Line.

Most of the construction is in Ari'el, Ma'ale Adumim, Efrat, and other established settlements. Several new settlements are also being planned, the largest of which will be called 'Ofarim. This settlement, which will link up with the settlement of Bet Arye, will consist of 2,400 housing units to be built in 1991 through 1993.

The cost of Minister Sharon's development plans in the territories is amazingly high. In 1991 alone, the ministry will invest 405 million shekels in apartment construction. Ninety million shekels will be invested in sewage, water, electricity, and access road infrastructure. An additional 65 million shekels will be invested in the placement of mobile homes. The total amount to be invested in the expansion of settlements in the territories by the end of 1993 stands at 2 billion shekels. These assessments do not include roads outside the settlements, high-tension power lines, or water lines to the settlements.

Most of the settlement leaders in Judaea and Samaria do not disguise their satisfaction; neither do they conceal the great construction drive in their settlements and, judging by the data which they have themselves reported to YEDIOT AHARONOT, a development budget without precedent in recent years is at stake.

A glance at the chart at the end of this report will show that the population of some of the settlements will grow by about 25 percent, and there are some—mainly the small ones—that will almost double their volume. "But," complains one of the local council heads, "no matter how much we manage to build, we never meet demand. We receive dozens of applications from families that would like to settle here, and we have nothing to offer them. Apartments only just under construction have already been sold, and those in the planning stages will be in demand as soon as ground is broken."

The Construction and Housing Ministry does not deny the data. "But this is in no way construction for immigrants," said an official source. "The ministry acts without concealing its activities; it is implementing the policy of a government whose guidelines speak explicitly of the reinforcement and enlargement of settlements in Judaea and Samaria. The ministry has no policy of directing immigrants to the territories. Not one immigrant was taken from the airport to territories settlements. The only ones to come here are those who so want. We cannot prevent immigrants from living in the settlements."

MK Dedi Zucker admits that there is indeed no direct government effort to direct immigrants to settlements: "No immigrant has been forcibly taken to a settlement, but the fact is that the price of apartments in other parts of the country is constantly rising. Houses in the settlements are almost given away, and within a short time, new immigrants will have no choice but to accept this gift. Thousands of unemployed immigrants, out to find cheap lodgings, will have no alternative."

Yesterday, the Construction and Housing Ministry reiterated that so far, only 1.5 percent of all the immigrants have settled in the territories. "A mere 3,000 immigrants have settled here," they said. An examination of recent

letters from local councils in the territories to the Construction and Housing Ministry's housing department shows that the picture is about to change.

"There is no more room for absorption in most settlements, and there is strong pressure from Jewish families who arrived in Israel a short time ago," clarified Arye 'Ofri, deputy head of the Samaria Regional Council. As required, 'Ofri contrived to put the message across without mentioning the word "immigrants."

The following table shows the rate of construction in the territories. It does not encompass all the settlements and is based on data released by settlement heads. [The three-color data is accompanied by a schematic map of the West Bank. Most of the figures are preceded by the word "approximately." The abbreviation "dcs" stand for "different construction stages."]

Settlement	Population	Construction	Immigrants
Qiryat Arba'	5,000	300 units in 18 months	150 families
Ma'ale Adumim	14,000	1,000 units in dcs	200 families
		2,000 units to be started in the summer	
Efrat	3,000	500 units almost finished	80 persons
		200 units just begun	
		1,000 units planned	
Ma'ale Efrayim	1,600	46 units in dcs	A few
Ari'el	10,000	650 units in dcs	1,200 persons
Elqana	3,000	150 units in dcs	30 families
Qarney Shomron	4,500	130 units in dcs	27 families
		600 planned units	
Alfey Menashe	2,850	150 units in dcs	A few
		272 units to be built soon	
Otanit	2,500	100 units in dcs	None
'Imanu'el	4,000	70 units in dcs	27 families
		2,000 planned units	

East Jerusalem Grove to Yeshiva

TA1004132091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 10 Apr 91 p A1

[Report by Moshe Reinfeld]

[Excerpts] According to the instructions of Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon, 30 dunams of olive groves in the neighborhood of Wadi al-Jawz in East Jerusalem were secretly turned over to possession of the students at the 'Ataret Kohanim yeshiva, for what was termed "guarding purposes." The plot was originally designated as an "open public area." The process has so far been defined as a temporary transfer of possession for a period of one year.

The land is situated to the northwest of the garages in Wadi al-Jawz. Its transfer to the possession of the yeshiva students astonished municipal sources, who claimed that the status change inherent in the transfer of possession over the plot, which is in the center of an Arab residential, industrial, and commercial area in East Jerusalem, will lead to anger and resentment and would serve as a new locus of dissension in the city.

The sources asserted that the site had been kept as an open public area, under the control of the Israel Lands Administration, for 22 years, and that the municipal authorities had strictly prevented any other use of the land. It is still unclear under which criterion the actual possession was changed and turned over to the yeshiva. What do yeshiva students need an olive grove for, the sources asked?

HA'ARETZ learned that the 'Ataret Kohanim students demand that the Israel Lands Administration pay them for "guarding the site." A structure, which was supposed to be a girls school, is currently being built near the site by the Municipal Education Authority. The Construction and Housing Ministry recently opposed turning over the structure for this purpose, and various elements suggested allocating it to a Jewish religious institution that will be set up in the area. [passage omitted]

A source at the 'Ataret Kohanim yeshiva yesterday evening said that he does know anything about such land; he added, however, that there have been attempts recently to draw the yeshiva's name into land allocations that are connected not to it but to other yeshivas. The Construction and Housing Ministry reported yesterday evening that Minister Sharon and senior ministry officials were touring the southern part of Israel, and therefore we could not receive any denials or confirmations of this report.

AL-SHA'B Denounces Regional Conference

TA1104191591 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Apr 91 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "The 'International,' Not the 'Regional,' Is Required"]

[Text] The Palestinian personalities who met with the U.S. secretary of state two days ago in Jerusalem during Baker's second visit to the region in less than one month revealed that no change whatsoever has occurred in the U.S. position toward the Palestinian problem. This position does not allow one to foresee any positive signs indicating the possibility of even the slightest progress toward a peaceful, comprehensive, and durable solution to the Palestinian problem, which is the core of the

conflict in the region, or even one indication that proves the credibility of the U.S. approach for establishing peace in the Middle East.

This conclusion reached by the Palestinian figures convinces us that the United States is not qualified to play the role of mediator in the peace process in the Middle East. Above all, that role requires a minimal disagreement between the United States and Israel, which is continuing to place obstacles on the road to peace in the region by relying on the unlimited U.S. support that represents a reward to Israel for all the acts it perpetrates against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

Hence, the outcome of the U.S. secretary's first and second visits to the region necessarily requires one to realize the dangers of these U.S. moves for the Palestinian cause in particular, and the Arab cause in general. These dangers obligate the Arabs to look at them with open eyes, so that they can oppose the U.S.-Israeli goals against Palestine—cause, representation, legitimacy, and identity. Those goals are no longer hidden from anyone.

A comprehensive and durable peace in the region does not materialize through a regional conference in which the Arabs offer everything in return for nothing from Israel and the United States except dust in their eyes. Rather, that peace can come within the framework of the international peace conference, which provides the best possibility for a settlement, sparing the nations of the region and the world new epochs of suffering and pain.

We stress that a unified Arab position, committed to the resolutions of Arab summits and based on the resolutions of international legitimacy, is the only guarantee for protecting Arab and Palestinian rights. That position alone can foil any schemes or plans being hatched against the present and future of Arab existence.

Hence, we call on the Arab states to rise above their differences and wounds. They should refuse to be dragged behind U.S. schemes that constitute a cover for achieving the new U.S. security arrangements in the region, the first part of which began with the destruction of Iraqi power.

Arab Paper Terms Prisoner Release 'Positive'

LD1004200791 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 10 Apr 91 p 5

[Article by AL-FAJR columnist Sirhan Salayimah: "Arens' Decision a Step Forward, But!"]

[Text] The decision adopted by Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens regarding the residents of the occupied Arab lands, stipulating the release of Palestinian detainees, as well as the recommendation to reform the tax department in the Gaza Strip, is a positive decision toward us that we cannot ignore, but on the other hand we do not consider it to be adequate.

Arens regarded this decision as a cornerstone for building bridges of confidence between the Palestinians and Israel. We agree with him that this is a cornerstone for building bridges, but the bridges do not need cornerstones. They require whole blocks that will in the future contribute to resolving the entire Middle East problem. The foundations of these blocks must be laid by Israel in firm cement. I believe that Arens, more than others, can initiate things because he is the main official responsible for the situation in the occupied Arab lands. Ultimately, he is responsible for the Israeli policy implemented in this area. We believe that the initiatives should be extended, to include the following:

1. Withdrawing the Israeli Army from the centers of towns, as well as from Arab population centers.
2. Reopening the closed universities, colleges, and schools.
3. Releasing all the intifadah detainees, abolishing administrative detention altogether, and closing down Ansar-3 [Qetzi'ot] prison.
4. Bringing back all the deportees, at least those deported during the intifadah.
5. Halting the policy of settlement building, confiscation of lands, and demolition of houses.
6. Halting the policy of collective punishment and tax raids.
7. Granting building permits to Palestinian residents, including the inhabitants of East Jerusalem.
8. Halting acts of provocation carried out by the settlers against the Arab residents.

We propose these points as an urgent and immediate need of concern to the Palestinian residents, who are currently living under difficult conditions. We believe, however, that this is not the solution to the Palestinian problem. In essence, the Palestinian problem is the problem of an entire people who want to exercise their full rights on their land within the framework of their independent state. We are aware that Arens by himself cannot make decisions in this regard, despite the fact that he can play a major role in the peace process.

We hope that Arens will study and implement the points we have addressed, because they could form a bridge of total confidence that we could cross together to achieve a just and durable peace on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy, as well as on the basis of the right of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state and the right of Israel to live within secure and recognized borders.

We hope that this decision by Arens will be followed by other decisions, because this decision could be the first one in the march of a thousand miles.

Minister Returns From Bulgaria With Message

LD0704134791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 7 Apr 91

[Text] The Bulgarian prime minister has delivered to Prime Minister Shamir a proposal for an agreement that

will regulate bilateral relations. The proposal was conveyed by Transportation Minister Moshe Qatzav, who returned from a visit to Bulgaria.

Discussions between Israeli and Bulgarian representatives will begin tomorrow in Jerusalem in preparation for the signing of an economic agreement between the two countries. The Bulgarians are interested in cooperating with Israeli industrial firms for the establishment of joint production lines based on Israeli technology and equipment. They likewise propose that Bulgaria serve as a bridge for joint economic development projects with the USSR.

German Research Minister Visits; on Aid to Iraq

TA0704162491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 7 Apr 91

[Text] Heinz Riesenhuber, Germany's research minister, said upon his arrival in Israel today that 16 German companies continued to supply technology and military equipment to Iraq even after the Security Council imposed an embargo on that country. The German minister reported that an extensive investigation of these companies as well as 10 companies and plants that maintained such ties with Iraq is currently in progress in his country. He promised that his government would take every measure against those who broke the law and harmed Germany's interests in the world.

Our correspondent Meron Tzur reports that the German minister is hosted by Science and Technology Minister Yuval Ne'eman, the joint Israel-German Research Foundation, and Hebrew University.

Janin Mayor's Brother Killed; Murderer Sentenced

TA0804114391 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Report by correspondent in the territories Udi Segal]

[Excerpts] Masked individuals today killed Da'ud Lahluh, approximately 50 years old, in the shopping area in central Janin by stabbing him in the back of the neck. The victim is the brother of Janin Mayor 'Abdallah Lahluh, who was appointed to the post by the security authorities. Intifadah activists suspected the family of assisting Israel and have frequently attempted to harm its members in the past. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] imposed a curfew on Janin in the wake of the incident. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 1000 GMT on 8 April reports that "the Jerusalem District Court has sentenced the murderer of the four women in Qiryat Yovel a month ago, Muhammad Hasan Abu-Jalala, to four life terms. The judge said the women were murdered only because they were Jews and a life sentence for such a crime was not severe enough."]

Further Reportage on Visit of Iraq's Tariq 'Aziz

'Aziz Says Iraq 'Secure,' 'Stable'

NC1104135191 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Report by Khalil al-Qaryuti from the Foreign Ministry in Amman on 11 April]

[Text] Jordanian-Iraqi discussions this morning at the Foreign Ministry between Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz dealt with the latest political developments in the Arab arena in addition to the political developments, efforts currently under way, and bilateral relations between the two countries.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz made statements to reporters after the talks ended. He began by answering a question about his talks in Amman and the situation in Iraq. He said:

[Begin 'Aziz recording] I was honored last night to meet His Majesty King Husayn and gave him an oral message from his brother President Saddam Husayn. The meeting with his majesty dealt with the strong bilateral and fraternal relations between the two fraternal countries. I explained to him the details of the situation in Iraq. The meeting also dealt with the Arab and political situation in general.

My discussions this morning with my brother Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri dealt with political developments, especially those in the Arab arena.

About the situation in Iraq, I would like to reassure the brothers here in Jordan—people, government, and leadership—that the situation in Iraq is secure and safe. The situation is stable, and there is no need to worry about Iraq, a united country, a safe country, a country where the leadership is working energetically with the people to rebuild and secure the basic services for the masses after these services were destroyed by the aggression forces and criminals who infiltrated from outside the country and attempted to tamper with the country under difficult circumstances, all of which were described by President Saddam Husayn in his speech of 16 March. These were circumstances under which the whole country was bleeding. They exploited this situation to tamper with the country and to realize old and historical foreign designs that go back thousands of years. These designs have roots in the war between Iraq and Iran, and now they are producing results. Their objective is to realize goals that go against the Arab people in Iraq and against Arab Iraq.

Thanks be to God, the people and their leadership succeeded in quickly annihilating this criminal and treacherous attempt. Now, as I have said, action is being taken to rebuild and reconstruct.

In the northern region, the same thing happened as in the south—infiltration from abroad. Armed elements exploited the aggression and the Armed Forces' preoccupation in confronting the aggression. They came to the villages and towns and spread corruption and destruction. They thought they could impose a new political reality on the country. It took no longer than a couple of days, however, for the leadership to rectify the situation in the northern region. The state regained control of the cities and the major areas of the northern region.

There is stability there now. Once they discovered that their conspiracy had failed and their designs had been thwarted, however, they began exhibiting the fabricated displays you can see on Western television, in collusion with the United States and the Western countries that sought to alter events in Iraq. Their intentions have been revealed beyond any doubt. When they discovered that their schemes had been thwarted, they created this display and began alleging that they were attempting to deal with it and to provide humanitarian assistance to these people. These people were forced to leave their towns and villages by saboteurs. They were plunged into an atmosphere of terror, fear, and media hyperbole. They did not need the food, water, and blankets now being dropped on them from planes when they were still in their towns and villages, where they were safe and secure. They had everything they needed to lead normal lives. It is clear they want to use this fabricated situation as an opening to meddle in Iraq's internal affairs and to exert pressure on the Iraqi people and leadership.

No doubt everything will become clear. Certain matters have already been clarified. The responsible authorities in the country, particularly in the northern region, are creating the conditions that will enable these people to return. They are supplying them with much of their food requirements. We hope that this issue will be dealt with in a way that bolsters national unity, prevents interference in Iraq's internal affairs, and thwarts the lingering conspiratorial schemes against Iraq. [end recording]

Regarding the announcement on the Iraqi leadership's intention to send envoys to a number of Arab countries, Mr. 'Aziz said:

[Begin 'Aziz recording] The Iraqi leadership and President Saddam Husayn in particular want to continue their contacts with their brothers in the Arab countries which adopted a sound stand on the events. I am here in Amman, in a country where both the leadership, headed by His Majesty King Husayn, and the people adopted clear national and pan-Arab stands. I will also visit Sanaa and Sudan. I and some of my colleagues will visit other countries after 'Id al-Fitr [feast marking the end of Ramadan]. [end recording]

Mr. 'Aziz also rejected the Western campaign over the Kurdish refugees. He said Kurds in Iraq enjoy their rights to the full and to a greater extent than they do in Turkey and Iran. He said Iraq rejects the idea of a security enclave and will oppose this notion with all means at its disposal because such an idea is the product of colonialism.

'Aziz Rejects Kurdish Enclaves

NC1104165791 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1610 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Amman, 11 Apr (PETRA)—Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz has praised the unequivocal, honorable, national, and pan-Arab positions adopted by Jordan under His Majesty King Husayn on the recent developments in the region.

In statements to journalists after his meeting here today with Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, Mr. 'Aziz said Iraq's leadership, and President Saddam Husayn in particular, are eager to continue contacts with their brothers in the Arab countries that adopted the "correct position" on the developments. He explained that his visit to Jordan is within this context. [passage omitted]

Mr. 'Aziz said that Iraq found solutions to the Kurdish problem 20 years ago. What future awaits the Kurds in other countries, he asked, stating that attempts to exploit the current situation in Iraq are intended to divert attention from the Israeli enemy's crimes against the Palestinian Arab people.

Mr. 'Aziz reiterated Iraq's rejection of British efforts to establish a security enclave for Kurds in northern Iraq. He said we reject this attempt and will resist it, as the prime minister stressed in his statement a few days ago. The prime minister, he noted, described these efforts as suspicious.

Mr. 'Aziz stressed that the main issue that needs to be tackled in the region is the Palestine question and the Palestinian people's rights. An end should also be put to Israel's expansionist and aggressive policy, he added.

Mr. 'Aziz welcomed any call to open a new page in inter-Arab relations if this call is earnest, serious, and accompanied by action. He said: We have heard words but seen no action so far. The new page in inter-Arab relations must be built on firm foundations, namely, the Arab League Charter and the key conventions approved by Arab summits.

Condemns Turkish, Iranian 'Interference'

NC1104152891 Paris AFP in English 1516 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Baghdad, April 11 (AFP)—Iraq appealed Thursday for more medical aid from international relief organisations but warned Iran and Turkey that they were "playing with fire" by interfering in the affairs of its Kurdish population. [passage omitted]

Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, meanwhile, warned Turkey and Iran against what he called their "opportunistic" interference in the affairs of Iraqi Kurds, urging Ankara to coordinate relief efforts with Baghdad.

"The Turkish and Iranian Governments must realize that the Kurdish question exists mainly in their own countries and not in Iraq," Mr. 'Aziz said at the end of a visit to Amman.

He said they were "playing with fire" because the sizeable Kurdish minorities in Iran and Turkey had "only one per cent" of the rights accorded by Baghdad to its Kurds.

"If they pursue their opportunistic behaviour, they must remember this is a double-edged sword," Mr. 'Aziz said after talks with Jordan's Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri.

Mr. 'Aziz said "nothing could justify" Wednesday's movement of Turkish troops into northern Iraq.

According to Ankara, the soldiers entered Iraq to ensure the security of Kurdish refugees, hundreds of thousands of whom have streamed into Turkey and Iran to escape Iraqi troops harrying Kurdish rebels. [passage omitted]

Al-Masri Leaves To Meet With Baker in Geneva

NC1104164891 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Amman, 11 Apr (PETRA)—Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri today left Amman for Geneva, where he will meet with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

The talks will deal with the general situation in the region and U.S. ideas now taking shape on resolving the Palestine question, as well as Jordan's role in the peace process.

Mr. al-Masri had earlier described his upcoming meeting with the U.S. secretary of state as an important one, considering the fact that the region is heading toward movement on the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict. [passage omitted]

Al-Asad, Mubarak Differences on Palestine Noted

NC1104160591 Amman AKHIR KHABAR in Arabic 8 Apr 91 p 2

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] Cairo—Informed sources have stressed that the discussions between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak were not successful. These talks were extended for a further day due to the disagreements that emerged during the two presidents' talks.

The political sources added that the disagreements are over the issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Mubarak tried to convince al-Asad on holding a regional rather than an international conference and also on resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute prior to resolving the Palestine question. The Syrian president, however, insisted on his position on the need to first hold an international conference to resolve the Palestine question.

On the other hand, al-Asad expressed his strong objection to Israel's demand that the Arab states show good intentions toward Israel before holding a regional conference, while Mubarak supports canceling the Arab boycott of Israel.

Mubarak believes that there is no hope for an international peace conference to succeed. Therefore, he prefers a regional one, as the sources said, because the world has become American in form and content, and because the margin of maneuver for the various states has become very narrow.

Moreover, the sources said that the meeting with journalists following the discussions showed that the Egyptian viewpoint has not been publicized, and that al-Asad was very determined on his position.

President Mubarak had declared a different position from the one he announced a few days ago when he said that an international conference would be useless and that a regional conference held in Cairo would be appropriate at this time. However, in front of the journalists and President al-Asad, he said that he supports an international conference to resolve the Palestine question!

In another development, the Egyptians leaked news about the supposedly secret visit by Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, PLO Executive Committee member. Authorized sources, according to AFP, said that Abu-Mazin met with the Egyptian foreign minister to clear the air between the two sides.

The news agency linked this visit to one by a delegation from Gaza to Cairo.

In conclusion, there are disagreements within the so-called alliance against Iraq on the Palestine question, because it seems that all are interested in playing unilateral roles without taking into consideration the Palestinians themselves!

U.S. Urged To 'Put Some Pressure on Israel'

JN1204101791 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 12 Apr 91 pp 1, 12

[Editorial: "The Geneva Meeting Between al-Masri and Baker and the New Peace Opportunity"]

[Text] Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri will meet in Geneva today with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker after a tour of some regional capitals, during which he was acquainted with the positions of their respective leaders on the peace process and the ongoing efforts to give it momentum.

In light of this tour and the statements made by officials in the capitals which Baker visited, it has become clear that there are essential differences and a big gap between the Arab positions and Israel's positions.

The Arab positions call for adherence to convening an international conference on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of exchanging land for peace. Meanwhile, the Israeli stance calls for convening a regional conference in the presence of Washington and Moscow—excluding the European countries that are members of the UN Security Council—and for holding direct talks with the Arab countries that are parties to the conflict without mentioning the PLO or Israel's readiness to withdraw from the occupied territory.

It seems that removing this gap between the Arab and Israeli positions is becoming more difficult each day, particularly because the U.S. position—after Washington's agreement on a regional conference instead of the international conference—has become closer to and even identical to the Israeli stand. At the same time, the Arab position was thrown out of balance after Egypt announced its nonobjection to the regional conference.

Hence, we can say that Baker's tour has not achieved the expected results.

The Palestinians and the Arabs welcomed President Bush's proposals affirming the principle of exchanging land for peace, adherence to Resolutions 242 and 338, and the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. And they expected that Baker's regional tour would be invested in the service of these positive proposals—thereby creating some hope of the possibility of reaching a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the region. However, the winds of the Camp David accords began blowing quickly and strongly. They might overpower Bush's proposals, and they might even abort them before they see the light of day.

Hence, we can say that if the al-Masri-Baker talks in Geneva today are characterized by clarity, candor, and concern to make the Bush proposals announced at the end of the Gulf war successful, then peace efforts might gain an important opportunity for success.

If Washington responds positively to the Jordanian viewpoint regarding a settlement based on international legitimacy, the principle of exchanging land for peace, and the participation of the Palestinian people on an equal footing with the other parties in the proposed negotiations, the peace process will be reinforced and big, important steps will have been taken.

This necessarily calls on the Bush administration to put some pressure on Israel and force it to respect international legitimacy and accept the principle of exchanging land for peace. Otherwise, this U.S. move will end—as the previous ones—in failure.

Israeli 'Regional Conference' Idea Rejected

NC1104153891 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 11 Apr 91 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "On Baker's Visit to Israel"]

[Text] It seems that the initial outcome of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's talks with Israeli officials over the past two days indicates that Yitzhaq Shamir's government is pressing ahead with its policy of buying time and disrupting diplomatic efforts aimed at making tangible progress toward Middle East peace.

It appears also, based on those discussions that were held in great secrecy, that James Baker's task revolves around the Israeli idea of holding a regional conference that would remove the Palestine question from its Arab dimension and, at the same time, allow Israel to gain Arab recognition by holding individual bilateral negotiations with each Arab state.

Perhaps the U.S. acceptance of the idea to hold a regional conference, which in essence is merely an Israeli idea, indicates that Washington is continuing its policy of pleasing Israel. That policy has never succeeded in the past to make the extremist Israeli right government budge an inch from its intransigent positions on the resumption of peace efforts in the region.

Thus, if the U.S.-Israeli discussions have resulted in a new agreement between the two sides on the next step in the current peace efforts, this means that the Arab sides have no choice but to heed the Israeli peace conditions and accept the regional conference option that was designed by Israel to torpedo the sweeping international march toward the international conference for establishing peace in the Middle East.

Hence, if the United States does not want its current diplomatic efforts to end in failure, it must now adopt the same principles of international legitimacy that were earlier implemented with regard to the Gulf crisis and declare its determination to implement the UN Security Council resolutions on the Middle East crisis, including Resolution 242, which embodies the principle of exchanging land for peace.

If the United States' efforts to formulate joint concepts with Israel on the ways and means to establish peace in the region exclude Arab aspirations and ambitions, this can only mean that Washington has decided to torpedo its own initiative and forfeit an opportunity, which President Bush has described as historic, to establish peace in this turbulent part of a world which seeks to successfully rid itself of all volatile regional problems.

Thus, James Baker, who moved to the Arab side yesterday, will find that the concerned Arab parties today are more determined than ever to adhere to the international peace conference, which provides a real opportunity to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict and resolve the Palestine question within the framework of international legitimacy under the UN umbrella and with its full participation as well as on the basis of the resolutions that tackle all aspects of this intricate historical crisis.

Paper Stresses Need for International Conference

NC1104165291 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 Apr 91 p 1

[Editorial: "No to the Regional Conference, Yes to the International Conference"]

[Text] Ever since President Bush announced his new proposals on the Palestine question and ending the Arab-Zionist conflict following the Gulf war on the basis of international Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of "land for peace," the Arabs feared that these proposals, which appear to be positive, would collide once again with the Israeli intransigence. Baker's tour to the capitals of the region suggests the seriousness of the U.S. position.

However, the agreement between the U.S. and Israel on holding a regional rather than an international conference, which was announced following Baker's talks with Shamir's government, the deliberate disregard for the PLO role in the negotiations and peace process, and the periodic reference to Shamir's plan which is based on and is part of the Camp David agreements, has all cast new doubt on the seriousness of the U.S. move and the possible success of President Bush's proposals.

The U.S. Administration emphasizes that international Resolutions 242 and 338 are the basis for the upcoming peace negotiations and Baker stressed this in Israel itself. However, the U.S. way of dealing with Israel, stressing coordination and cooperation between the two sides despite the declared difference in viewpoints, prompts us to conclude that Baker's tour will not produce significant results that would help to achieve a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the region.

There are still positive points hovering in the region which are certainly the result of a positive European position on the international conference and Resolutions 242 and 338.

It seems that the Jordanian move toward the European community has entrenched this positive position, especially the French one.

Hence, we can say that the Arab parties concerned with the conflict must move to unify their positions, especially since Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and the PLO insist on holding an international conference, not a regional one.

If James Baker hears in Egypt and Syria, as well as during his meeting with the Jordanian foreign minister in Geneva tomorrow, what he has already heard from the Palestinian delegation in Jerusalem, the U.S. position will be pushed toward adherence to President Bush's proposals that are based on international resolutions and the "land for peace" principle.

The unity of the Arab and Palestinian positions is the only guarantee to block Shamir's plan and to stress the implementation of international legitimacy and Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

PLO, Europe Role in Regional Conference Urged

JN1104090591 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 11-12 Apr 91 p 4

[Editorial: "The Missing Link"]

[Text] In the spirit of dialogue and negotiations to solve problems, a proposal like that advanced for a regional conference might indeed be welcome. But under the current circumstances, that conference's idea touted by the U.S. and Israel seems to have overlooked two most essential elements: The part that should be played by the Palestinians in it and a role for the Europeans, who have equal, if not more, interests in a secure and stable Middle East as the Americans. It is naive to ignore the role of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in such a gathering and to see the deletion of any reference to a European role as an oversight since the American-Israeli move has all the trappings of a design specifically aimed at leaving out influential players from taking part in the peace process.

Jordan has been one of the consistent supporters of a conference on regional security, but not along the lines that the Americans and Israelis are apparently thinking about and moving. The Kingdom has always sought a broader framework, which deals with all problems of the region, including borders, water, oil and other natural resources as well as the interests of our immediate neighbours, the Europeans. What the Americans and Israelis appear to have done is borrow a chapter from the Jordanian call and twist and bend it to suit their vision of peace in the Middle East.

Needless to say that there might be a perception on the part of Israelis and Americans that any European involvement in the diplomatic process would only complicate things for them by adding new rules which would not serve their objectives of giving up as little as possible of Israeli demands and conditions.

It is a foregone conclusion that Israel has no interest in taking the wisest course for peace in the Middle East through bringing about an equitable settlement of the root conflict, the Palestinian problem, in all its dimensions. There is also little doubt that the Israelis want to avoid the fact that international legitimacy and justice should be the parameters guiding the future of the region.

What is most painful in the whole exercise, however, is the fact that Washington, which has been vociferously expounding its keen desire for just and durable peace in the Middle East on the basis of the legitimate rights of all parties concerned, seems to be going along more with Israeli ideas and thinking than with what should actually be done in light of the results of the Gulf crisis and war.

The obvious questions that Jordan would carry to Geneva for Friday's meeting between Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker are: Why are the Palestinians and the PLO and why are the Europeans sidelined? Does the U.S. seriously believe that a forum which is devoid of key players could produce realistic results?

There cannot be credence to the argument that it it is too premature for the PLO and the Europeans to enter the scene, since it is clear that without real and active Palestinian and European involvement from the very beginning there cannot be any hope for justice and acceptance of international law. While the PLO role has to be addressed in depth, it gives us hope to note that European Community envoys are also meeting Mr. Baker in Geneva on Friday. They ought to ask some hard questions and demand clear answers. After all, they were the ones who gave an unmistakable green signal to the Americans to proceed with the military option to end the Gulf crisis in the name of international legitimacy.

First Postwar Shipment of Iraqi Oil Arrives

JN1204085591 Amman AL-RAY in Arabic 12 Apr 91 pp 1, 12

[Excerpt] The first shipment of Iraqi crude oil, extracted from al-Qa'im oil fields in western Iraq, arrived in Jordan yesterday evening, Thursday, after an approximately two-month suspension because of the Gulf war and the allies' pounding of oil tankers.

An informed source told AL-RAY that about 50 oil tankers set out from Iraq and began arriving in Jordan on a journey that was described as experimental.

The source asserted that Iraq has made official assertions that crude oil is available from al-Qa'im oil fields, and that shipments can be made to Jordan from these fields. [passage omitted]

Japan Extends Loan Worth $425 Million

NC1104174591 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1625 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Amman, 11 Apr (PETRA)—The Jordanian and Japanese Governments exchanged memoranda on a Japanese loan worth 59.486 billion yen, equivalent to $425 million, at the Planning Ministry today.

The memoranda were signed for Jordan by Planning Minister Dr. Khalid Amin 'Abdallah and for Japan by Japanese Ambassador in Amman Tadayuki Nonoyama.

The planning minister said after the signing ceremony that the 30-year loan extended by the Japanese Government had an interest rate of 1 percent and included a 10-year grace period. [passage omitted]

Israeli Fighter Attack Near Sidon Reported

NC1204123391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1220 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] We begin our newscast with a security report from the south. Security reports say that Israeli planes are carrying out intensive flights after having conducted mock raids. According to unofficial reports, however, Israeli warplanes raided the outskirts of al-Salihiyah, east of Sidon, at 1400 today. Columns of smoke are seen rising from the targeted areas. There have been no immediate reports on the outcome of the raid. [Paris AFP in English at 1209 GMT, in a similar report adds: "Israeli Air Force jets on Friday bombed Palestinian targets northeast of this city in south Lebanon, police said.]

Casualties Reported

NC1204151091 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1450 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Israeli aircraft today raided Palestinian positions east of Sidon only hours after clashes had escalated on the Kafr Falus front.

Preliminary reports indicate that 12 persons were killed or wounded in the Israeli raids, which also caused serious material damage. The raids were staged in two waves and targeted positions belonging to Fatah-the Revolutionary Council, the Palestinian Liberation Front [PLF], and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command in the area of al-Salihiyah-Majdalyun east of Sidon.

[In a Sidon-datelined report, Paris AFP in English at 1431 GMT on 12 April adds: "Four Palestinian fighters were killed and nine wounded when Israeli Air Force jets bombed a base southeast of here on Friday, Lebanese sources said." The AFP report goes on to note that Muhammad Yasin, PLF leader in southern Lebanon, said that the PLF's military chief for southern Lebanon, Abu-Khaldun, was among those killed.]

Committees Formed To Receive Militias' Weapons

NC1104080191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] According to press reports, the Defense Ministry has formed a general committee to receive the militias' weapons. The committee will have 20 members. It will be chaired by Staff Brigadier General Michel Mu'ayti, with Naval Staff Brig. Gen. Samir Khadim as deputy chairman. The committee includes members from the air, naval, logistical, operations, signal, engineering, and security forces, as well as from other military sectors.

The reports add that subcommittees have also been formed to receive the militias' weapons in the military areas. Staff Brig. Gen. Tahsin 'Abbas has been appointed as chairman of the Beirut area committee; Staff Colonel 'Atif Tarabay as chairman of the Jabal Lubnan area committee; Staff Col. Edmond Ghanim as chairman of al-Biqa' area committee; Staff Col. Muhammad Jallul as chairman of the northern area committee; and Staff Col. Rafiq al-Hajjar as chairman of the southern area committee.

These committees will be assisted by the chief of the intelligence branch and the commander of the police force in each area.

Palestinian Factions Silent on Return of Weapons

NC1104161691 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The common ground mediators are trying to find between the Lebanese Government and the Palestinians, in order to implement the decision to disband the militias, has yet to emerge. As is clear from various statements, contacts held in Beirut, Tunisia, and Algeria, have failed to produce the desired results. A meeting of Palestinian factions at Mar-Ilyas camp, which was not attended by the Fatah Movement, has called for preserving the Palestinian resistence. A statement issued by the factions pointed out that the Palestinian people and their revolution want to see Lebanon regain its well-being and unity, bolster its role within the framework of its Arab identity and pan-Arab role, realize security and stability for its people, and preserve the security, dignity, and holy cause of the Palestinian people. The statement made no mention of any handover of weapons to the Lebanese Government nor did it say anything about the Lebanese Government's taking control of security in the camps.

Hizballah Opposes Return of Weapons to Government

NC1104214591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] With attention focused on the south and the related UN resolution, it emerged today that Hizballah refuses to allow any hand to touch the weapons resisting Israel, even if this hand belongs to the authorities.

Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli has affirmed that his party believes weapons are needed to resist Israel. He said: These weapons are very important to us, and we want to prevent any hand from touching them, even if it is the hand of authority.

He pointed out that no meeting has taken place with the committee in charge of disbanding the militias and collecting the weapons, saying: I do not expect a military confrontation between the Palestinians and the Lebanese Army.

Al-Tufayli said that the members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards [in Lebanon] are experts who provide expertise in social matters and day-to-day life and who train resistance men. They, he added, came here at the decision of the Islamic Republic of Iran and it will decide when they will leave. He noted that that their number is small and can be counted only in the hundreds.

He asserted that armed resistance against Israel will not stop today or tomorrow; it will continue until right has been restored.

He noted that the current government has managed to take good measures in the process of establishing security and peace in Lebanon, although enormous obstacles to this government still exist.

Asserting Hizballah's rejection of the appointment of deputies and its opposition to the existing regime, he said: We would support secularism if it meant social benefits for the tormented Lebanese people.

Junblatt Urges Dialogue With Palestinians

NC0904211991 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Minister Walid Junblatt said he hopes that all means of dialogue with the Palestinians would be used before coming to collision, should they refuse to hand over their weapons.

In an interview with AL-LIWA', Minister Junblatt emphasized that the civil administration in the moutains will remain but in a different form.

Ministers on Domestic Developments, Weapons

NC0104094091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] Justice Minister Khatchig Babikian has affirmed that the time limits contained in the militia disbandment bill cannot be violated, because they were set after a quiet dialogue with all parties and also after the [Ministerial] Committee had ascertained that these time limits are sefficient for the implementation of the bill, taking into account the Army's capabilities.

Minister George Sa'adah maintained that it is impermissible to effect a selective implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement. He said that the situation is delicate and that if things remain unchanged, nothing is ruled out, including resignation. Sa'adah called for holding a cabinet meeting in which all articles of the al-Ta'if agreement should be discussed. He added that all these articles should also be referred to the Chamber of Deputies for discussion.

In a related development, Minister 'Abdallah al-Amin said that Fatah official in Lebanon Zayd Wahbah will have to bear full responsibility for ignoring the Lebanese Government's orders to hand over Palestinian weapons to the state. Al-Amin added: The Palestinians surrendered to the Israeli enemy in 1982. They should hand over their weapons to the authority which is safeguarding the dignity of the Palestinian people. He proposed the holding of elections in Palestinian camps on the issue under the supervision of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

Ministers 'Abdallah al-Amin, Muhsin Dallul, and Michel al-Murr returned from Damascus yesterday evening after holding talks with Syrian officials on the latest Lebanese developments.

Informed sources in Beirut said that U.S. ambassador to Lebanon Crocker returned to Lebanon yesterday to resume his official duties. Crocker left Lebanon on 19 January when the Gulf crisis was in full swing after he had received threats.

Al-Hirawi on Palestinian Presence, Syrian Ties

NC1004204291 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has stressed that the war in Lebanon is over and that the representative of the Lebanese people placed Lebanon on the path of peace when they formulated the agreement in al-Ta'if.

He also clarified that the dispatch of the Lebanese Army to the south was a necessary step despite the scarce number of weapons in its possession. He pointed out that benefits expected from this step outweighed the risks associated with this process.

President al-Hirawi said the government will not accept any security obstruction in the south from any source whatsoever, Lebanese or non-Lebanese. He stressed that the decision to disband militias applies to the Lebanese and the non-Lebanese.

This emerged in a lengthy interview which President al-Hirawi granted to the Paris-based magazine L'ARABIES [name as heard], which published the interview under the headline "War in Lebanon Is Over."

In the interview, President al-Hirawi discussed the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, Lebanese-Syrian relations, the General Michel 'Awn issue, the decision to disband the militias, and the reconstruction of Lebanon, expressing frank and clear positions on these topics.

President al-Hirawi said the decision to disband the militias applies to all those who came to Lebanon and hoped to turn every camp or inch of Lebanese soil into their own homeland. He added: If we gave the Palestinians a warm welcome, this does not mean they can build an army within the army or a state within the state. If they submit to the state's decision, then they are welcome. If they do not, then they must know what happens to anyone who tries to obstruct the process of peace in Lebanon. I hope that the Lebanese and the others understand the lessons and act nobly and rationally, because the government in Lebanon will not hesitate to confront any challenge to peace.

Regarding Lebanese-Syrian relations, President al-Hirawi said: These relations date back to 1943 when both countries gained their independence. The two peoples are very close to one another, even at the level of families and intermarriages. Regrettably, however, relations between the governments of the two countries

lacked an independent basis. [Lakin ma' al-asaf, lam takun hunaka 'alaqatun bayn al-hukmayn fi al-baladayn 'ala asasin mustaqil.] For many years, Lebanon took advantage of the instability in Syria which resulted from the successive coups. Look, for example, at the rapprochement that is taking place in Europe on the economic and security levels, and also at what is happening in Latin America or among Canada, the United States, and Mexico. How, then, can two countries—united by a shared language and sky and by geographical proximity—not have a rapprochement? Is it possible that Syria and Lebanon should not have brotherly agreements, especially on the security and economic levels? What will happen if we were deprived of our transit trade?

He added: Some Lebanese citizens are worried by what they feel is Syria's tutelage over Lebanon. To those citizens we say that Lebanon is not a country that has oil and its land does not have iron, diamonds, or magnesium. Our country has 17 sects and there can be no stability unless those communities reach understanding among themselves. I reject claims that Syria wants to annex Lebanon. Were this the case, it would have gone along with Iraq's annexation of Kuwait, which is rich in mineral resources. If Syria wanted to annex Lebanon, it would have turned a blind eye to Iraq's annexation of Kuwait.

Palestinian Group Criticizes Al-Hirawi Remarks

NC1204153491 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] In a statement it issued in Damascus, Fatah-the Uprising has criticized President Ilyas al-Hirawi's statement that the Palestinians were the cause of the dirty wars in Lebanon. It said that President al-Hirawi's statements are provocative and imply a high degree of hatred and tension.

Minister on Government Position on Resolution 425

NC1104114691 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has spelled out the position of the legitimate authority on the current situation in southern Lebanon and the future of southern Lebanon. He indicated that Resolution 425 is now simmering on high heat after it had been frozen for a long time.

Minister Buwayz disclosed that the United States rejected Israel's condition for the implementation of Resolution 425 that the existence of a Lebanese state must be in accordance with Israel's needs and requirements.

Phalangist Party on 'Crucial' Stage of Accord

NC0104201491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 1 Apr 91

[Text] Following a discussion of the latest developments, the Phalangist Party Political Bureau has issued a statement calling on all those concerned with the national accord process—whether they are in or outside Lebanon—to act quickly to correct the course of the implementation of the al-Ta'if accord to prevent the accord from being jeopardized. The political bureau tasked the leader of the party with pursuing contacts with all the Lebanese leaders, because the delicate and crucial stage requires a comprehensive national responsibility for handling matters with calm and without any haste or touchiness.

Hizballah Calls for March on Jerusalem Day

NC1204092891 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0830 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Today marks the beginning of the last week of the blessed month of Ramadan, the international day for Jerusalem. The Great Imam Khomeyni, may good bless him, called for this day to be an important stage in the history of the Muslims. The Imam wanted this day to be a starting point for the oppressed in all parts of the world to struggle persistently and continue to seek the unity of the land and the nation through the liberation of Jerusalem and the restoration of the usurped right to the real rightful people. It is very important for us to realize that our small ambitions cannot be achieved unless we take firm steps toward the realization of the central goal of our struggle; namely, the elimination of Israel.

Therefore, more than ever before and during the difficult phase through which the nation is passing—the phase of American domination of our destiny and sanctities—we are called upon to unite cohesively against the imperialist schemes targeting our dear Islam. Participation in the day for Jerusalem is an expression of rejecting the established fact imposed on us by the enemy; it is an expression of readiness to support the mujahidin who are confronting the Zionist enemy in the occupied territories, as well as in the occupied [Lebanese] south; it is a [word indistinct] for the pure blood of our martyrs that irrigated the soil of our holy land.

On this occasion, the Hizballah Popular Information Mobilization Department called on the Muslims to participate in the popular march that will start off from outside the Imam 'Ali Mosque in the city of Ba'labakk at 1330 today.

Commander Interviewed on Role in Lebanon

NC1104140791 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 10 Apr 91 p 4

[Interview with Hadi Reza 'Askari, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in Lebanon, by correspondent Muna Sukkariyah in Ba'labakk—date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Sukkariyah] What is the role of the Revolutionary Guard in Lebanon?

['Askari] We have come to Lebanon through an invitation by the Lebanese people to confront Israel. We have come to train people to fight Israel. At the time the Guard came to Lebanon, Israel was occupying part of it, and the Guard came to raise the morale of the fighters and to lift the revolutionary spirit for the confrontation of Israel. Certainly, the basic decision concerning this matter was left to Imam Khomeyni, may God bless him. The decision on the Guard's arrival was also made in coordination with the brother Syrians. After Israel's withdrawal, the Guard continued to train the people in addition to rendering other services. Of course the training was not confined to military work alone, but we were also giving training in ideology and in subjects related to culture and education. In terms of services, the Guard set up Imam Khomeyni Hospital in Ba'labakk, which offers medical treatment to more than 15,000 patients every month.

[Sukkariyah] Are the medical staff and nurses Iranian?

['Askari] The physicians and nurses were Iranian, but the majority of the hospital staff now is Lebanese, but the management is still in the hands of the Iranians.

[Sukkariyah] Is the management in the hands of the Revolutionary Guard or civilians?

['Askari] In the name of the Guard. They are few in number, but the hospital is in their hands. The Guard has secured 70 percent of the water for the city of Ba'labakk. [passage omitted]

[Sukkariyah] The Lebanese state has made a decision to disband the Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, and naturally the decision will apply to you...

['Askari] First: We are not militias...

[Sukkariyah, interrupting] What are you then?

['Askari] We are not armed forces. This is a false expression to use when describing us. We have come by orders of the Imam [Khomeyni] in coordination with Syria and at the invitation of the Lebanese people to train the people.

[Sukkariyah] Who among the Lebanese? Were you invited by the state?

['Askari] Those who addressed the invitation to us were the Lebanese Muslims. At that time, there was no state, only the Syrians were present. So, the Muslim people, the Syrians, and the orders of the imam were three factors that brought us to Lebanon. We agree that all weapons be directed against Israel and that all the weapons inside [Lebanon] must be for the purpose of fighting Israel only. We believe that the presence of weapons should be for fighting Israel only.

[Sukkariyah] Following the state's decision to dissolve the militias, will the Revolutionary Guard stay in Lebanon or withdraw?

['Askari] Our stay or departure is something that concerns those who invited us. After that, the Islamic Republic of Iran will coordinate with Syria concerning this issue.

[Sukkariyah] How many are you in Lebanon?

['Askari] Not many, a very small number.

[Sukkariyah] Are they all military cadres for training?

['Askari] Of course not. There are military cadres and others who offer ideology and social services. [passage omitted]

[Sukkariyah] Is the Revolutionary Guard thinking of returning to the South to resume its activity?

['Askari] If the people invite us.

[Sukkariyah] Will you return as the Iranian Revolutionary Guard or under the guise of a Lebanese faction?

['Askari] We are an Islamic Revolutionary Guard. We are revolutionaries. This is our name everywhere. Wherever we go, this is our name.

[Sukkariyah] Have you established ties with other parties in Lebanon?

['Askari] We have relations with the Amal Movement and Hizballah. We have strong relations with the national forces, especially the Palestinian forces, the Progressive Socialist Party, and the Islamic groups in Sidon and Tripoli.

[Sukkariyah] How much money have you spent in Lebanon in the form of aid and for other reasons?

['Askari] I have not calculated figures, but it is a large amount. I remember that during General Michel 'Awn's war against the Muslims, Iran gave $20 million in oil, flour, and medicine.

[Sukkariyah] When will you leave the Shaykh 'Abdallah barracks?

['Askari] This is a matter that depends on Syria, Lebanon, and the Lebanese state.

[Sukkariyah] Have you been informed of the need to leave the barracks?

['Askari] Basically, we are guests at the barracks, which is in the hands of another party.

[Sukkariyah] Which party is it?

['Askari] Hizballah.

[Sukkariyah] You have stated that you have come as a revolutionary guard to fight Israel. You then turned to offering services. Is there any longer a justification for your stay in Lebanon?

['Askari] As long as Israel is present, we are present. If Israel withdraws from Lebanon, this is another matter.

[Sukkariyah] Does this mean that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard will not withdraw from Lebanon before Israel withdraws from southern Lebanon?

['Askari] As long as Israel is present, we will stay to help the people.

[Sukkariyah] What is your connection with the foreign hostages held in Lebanon?

['Askari] This is a Lebanese matter that does not concern us. We have nothing to do with this affair. If, as a result of certain circumstances, some of the Muslims with whom we have a relationship are holding hostages, this is not proof that we are connected with this subject. There is a group that is holding hostages. We had no relationship with this group when it kidnapped the hostages. We established relations with it afterward. It is our humanitarian duty to help liberate the hostages. Our human conscience does not allow us to distinguish between Lebanese, Palestinian, American, and Western hostages. There is no difference. On this basis, we are striving to liberate all of them.

[Sukkariyah] There are Lebanese parties that say they are not connected to the hostage issue and that this issue concerns Iran.

['Askari] Whom do you mean by this?

[Sukkariyah] More than one Islamic party has denied any connection to the hostage issue in press accounts and other statements.

['Askari] We too say, according to our viewpoint, that Hizballah and other Islamic forces have no connection to the hostage issue.

[Sukkariyah] Then, who are they?

['Askari] They are small groups that are not connected to big parties. They are the ones that are meant.

[Sukkariyah] Do you know them?

['Askari] We do not know them, but they contact us when they want to. We do not know them.

[Sukkariyah] Do they have a connection with Iran?

['Askari] Certainly not.

[Sukkariyah] In your opinion, what is Iran's role in the process of releasing hostages?

['Askari] It is a humanitarian role—one of human conscience. When it is said that Iran seeks to free the Palestinian and Lebanese hostages, it, by the same token, seeks to free the American hostages. Those concerned with this question are the Syrians. As Iran has this humanitarian feeling, Syria too has this feeling about the hostages issue.

[Sukkariyah] How does Iran contact them?

['Askari] If they want to contact us, when they say in the newspapers that they want to free the prisoners, they do not contact us. [sentence as published] Those concerned with the hostage issue are the ones who contact us.

Relations With America

[Sukkariyah] What if American-Iranian relations improve and consequently diplomatic relations are restored?

['Askari] There are several basic conditions for the improvement of these relations. Imam Radwan 'Ali has defined these conditions. They are:

—That America settle Iran's debts.
—That America's relationship with us be not one of domination; namely, it should not control us. It should be a normal relationship.
—That the interests of the two parties be taken into consideration—namely, not only America's interests but our interests too. The imam says, however, that America's relationship with us is like one between a wolf and a lamb. We do not want such a relationship. If a relationship does indeed exist between the two states, this relationship is being studied. [passage omitted]

[Sukkariyah] Another question about the hostages: When will they be released?

['Askari] Your must ask those who hold the hostages. America does not want to involve itself in this issue from a humanitarian standpoint. It only wants to exploit political interests by involving itself. Iran has a desire to free Palestinian and Lebanese hostages, as well as the foreign hostages.

Al-Hirawi Receives Soviet Envoy, Ministers

NC0504194691 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi received Soviet Ambassador Gennadiy Ilichev this morning, who came to say goodby before leaving for home.

The president then met with Minister Muhsin Dallul, who said that the talks with President al-Hirawi dealt with the disbanding of militias and the imposition of state authority over all Lebanese territory. Dallul added that the committees entrusted with the task of disbanding the militias have begun their contacts. A statement issued by the Palestinian side contained many positive elements.

Minister Dallul said that centers for the surrender of weapons, particularly the weapons that belonged to the Lebanese Army, will be established on Wednesday.

President al-Hirawi also received Minister Khatchig Babikian and Egyptian Ambassador Hasan Shash. Ambassador Shash said that he conveyed to the president an oral message from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak on the latest developments in the Arab region following the return of the Arab League headquarters to Egypt and the visit of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and other presidents to Cairo.

Asked about the disbanding of the militias, Shash said that Egypt supports the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement.

The president then met with Army Commander General Emile Lahhud. Ambassador Amin al-Khazin also called on the president.

Reportage on Secretary of State Baker's Visit

Peace Conference Proposed

NC1204082491 Paris AFP in English 0809 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, April 12 (AFP)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker left Friday for Geneva after a 24-hour visit to Syria during which he met Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, official sources said.

Mr. Baker is to due to meet Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri in Switzerland.

The secretary of state wound up here a Middle East tour that also took him to Turkey, Israel and Egypt and during which he proposed a regional peace conference.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruk al-Shar' told a press conference at the end of Mr. Baker's visit on Friday that his country wanted a peace conference, without rejecting a plan for a regional conference proposed by Mr. Baker.

Such a conference, which Israel has given some support, is seen as a way to start the process toward a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr. al-Shar' said Syria was "for holding a peace conference where the United Nations will have a significant role."

But when asked whether he was insisting on an international peace conference, as wanted by many Arab states, he would only say "We want a peace conference."

Reporters Briefed

JN1204124891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1132 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Foreign Minister al-Shar' this morning held a press conference that was attended by Arab and foreign media correspondents in Syria.

At the beginning of the press conference, Baker said: Yesterday I met with President Hafiz al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' for five and a half hours in two separate meetings. The talks focused on the process of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. During these two meetings, we exchanged opinions and views which I believe were useful. We agreed that there is an opportunity to give a momentum to the peace process, and that we should not waste this chance.

Baker added: I presented some ideas that we discussed in the other stops in our tour of the region, as well as the results of these talks with the other parties in the region. He said that the Syrians explained to us that there are many positive elements in the proposals we presented. There are other elements in which we were not in agreement. I will not go into detail as I did in the other stops in my tour in terms of points of agreement and disagreement, because we really want to benefit from this opportunity.

The Syrians presented many proposals which we discussed in detail, and which we will discuss further. I presented two issues to them, and the Syrian officials will discuss them. My colleague Faruq al-Shar' will speak in the name of the Syrian Government. My understanding of what we agreed on yesterday is that they will study these ideas seriously from a standpoint aimed at establishing—if possible—a basis in accordance with which we can cooperate and proceed. The Syrian leadership yesterday expressed its desire to continue working toward the peace process in the coming phase.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' said: I am in agreement with U.S. Secretary of State Baker regarding what he said. I would like to describe the talks he held yesterday with President Hafiz al-Asad as satisfactory. We agreed on some points, and there are other points that need further discussion by the two sides. We agreed that all parties concerned should seek to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and that a peace conference should convene to implement these resolutions. He added that a peace conference should convene in which the United Nations will play an important role.

Asked whether the conference will convene under the supervision of the permanent members of the Security Council, al-Shar' said: The United Nations will have an important role in such a conference.

Asked if this role will be played by the permanent members of the Security Council, al-Shar' said: We do not want to go into detail; but, as I noted and as Mr. Baker noted, there are points that need further discussion.

Answering another question on how the Palestinian delegation will be represented in such a conference, al-Shar' said: This needs further discussion. For our part, we will contact our Arab brothers to find the best formula to guarantee the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people.

Asked if Syria would agree, after opening the conference, to the issue being discussed by way of direct bilateral or collective talks, he said: The final objective is to reach a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian question.

Commenting, Mr. Baker said: May I add that there is actually general agreement concerning the fact that solutions cannot be imposed on parties. If they really want peace, they should do so through direct negotiations. I believe there is a clear agreement in this regard. Therefore, any conference held should not be aimed at imposing solutions, voting on that, and so forth.

Mr. al-Shar' remarked: The aim of the peace conference is not to dictate things to others, but to be effective so that the concerned parties can continue discussions in order to reach a settlement.

Asked about the U.S. Administration's position on the warning it gave the Iraqi regime on aerial operations in northern Iraq and how it will implement them, Baker said: This matter is operational, and I will not go into detail. Responding to another question on the political aim behind securing supplies to the refugees, Mr. Baker said: The political aim is to guarantee noninterference in the international humanitarian relief efforts.

Mr. Baker was asked: You said no solutions can be imposed, but how will you implement the Security Council resolutions in the peace process? He answered: The best thing about these resolutions, which provide a framework for the concerned parties, is the chance to sit at the table of direct negotiations and discuss differences. Mr. al-Shar' interjected: Our understanding of this point is that the Security Council resolutions should be implemented, and that this conference will not impose anything outside the framework of the Security Council resolutions.

Replying to the question on whether Syria will agree to a regional conference as a first step toward a comprehensive settlement, Mr. al-Shar' said: I do not know what you mean by the regional conference. Syria's position is that of holding a peace conference in which the United Nations plays an important role. By regional conference I mean the participation of the United States, the Soviet Union, the Arab countries, Israel, and a delegation of the Palestinian people and the EC. Mr. al-Shar' replied: Yes, for participation, and this is the peace conference we are seeking.

Here Mr. Baker made the following comment: You know what is important here, it is the essence and not the appearance. Names are not important, what is important is the desire of the parties involved in the conflict to seek a true reconciliation.

Commenting, Mr. al-Shar' said: Syria is determined to reach a just and comprehensive peace for the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question, and the determination to do so exists. We found that Mr. Baker and the U.S. Administration have a similar determination to achieve this target. This was the important thing in yesterday's talks between President Hafiz al-Asad and Mr. Baker.

Baker was asked: How different is your second trip to the region from the previous one? The second question is: Syria will celebrate its national day on 17 April. When will the Palestinians celebrate their national day? Baker answered: I cannot answer your question. But as for your first question, I said in the first stop of this trip that I believe some progress has been made. We are dealing here with an unusual, longstanding complex problem and we cannot solve it in one or two trips or overnight. We can solve it only when there is a real desire by the conflicting parties for a true reconciliation, provided that we continue all efforts and promote the peace process, and this is what we intend to do. I said, as all agree, that no one can impose peace in the Middle East. We may benefit from this opportunity, however, and this is what we are trying to do. I appreciate the statement Mr. al-Shar' has just made, because I feel that there is a real desire to move ahead, and that there are still some issues that need to be resolved. These and others are issues that were presented here and on every stop during this trip. Therefore, what matters now is to continue working to resolve these issues and see if it is possible to bring the parties together.

Hostages 'Could Be' Released During Visit

PM1104153491 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 12 Apr 91 p 8

[Unattributed report: "Hostages's Release To Coincide With Bush's Visit"]

[Text] Negotiations are being conducted behind the scenes in regional and international circles in order to arrive at a formula that will bring a happy ending to the crisis of the hostages held in Lebanon.

Informed sources expect current contacts to succeed in releasing all the hostages, especially in view of the imminence of the visit that President George Bush is expected to make to the region at the end of April to meet with the leaders of the Arab states that participated in the Gulf war. Of course, Damascus will be a principal destination for President Bush—that is, if he comes—and there he will meet with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and discuss with him the future of the situation in the Middle East under the new world order. Diplomatic sources do not rule out that the visit could be an occasion for releasing the hostages, who would then be accompanied by President Bush. The sources believe that if the hostage issue comes to a happy ending in such a manner, it is bound to strengthen Syria's role regionally and internationally, in view of the major success scored by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's policy, especially during the Gulf war.

Tunisian Foreign Minister Visits, Holds Talks

View Ties With Al-Asad

NC1004130991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1115 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya at 1330 today. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the Tunisian ambassador to Damascus attended the meeting.

Al-Shar' received Ben Yahya this morning in the presence of the Tunisian ambassador to Damascus. The meeting involved a discussion of bilateral relations and the various aspects of the Arab situation following the Gulf war. The discussion focused on the Arab-Israeli

conflict, the Palestinian issue, and the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338, and within the framework of a UN sponsored international conference.

Confers With Khaddam

NC1104111691 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1015 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya at 1000 today. The meeting was attended by the Tunisian ambassador in Damascus. Discussions dealt with the Arab situation in the light of the Gulf war outcome and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi also received the Tunisian foreign minister at 1200 today. Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, and the Tunisian ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting. Ben Yahya conveyed the Tunisian prime minister's greetings to Mr. al-Zu'bi who asked him to convey his best wishes to the Tunisian prime minister. Discussions dealt with the development of bilateral relations and the steps that must be taken to bolster and develop bilateral cooperation in all fields. The discussions also dealt with the situation in the region in the aftermath of the Gulf war and other issues of joint interest.

Evaluates Results, Departs

NC1104174791 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1640 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, 11 Apr (SANA)—Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya left Damascus this afternoon after a visit to Syria during which he met with President Hafiz al-Asad.

Mr. Ben Yahya was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Mr. Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; Khalil Mohamed Fadhel, Tunisian ambassador in Damascus; a number of ranking officials at the Foreign Ministry; and the staff of the Tunisian Embassy in Damascus.

In a statement to the SANA correspondent before departing, Mr. Ben Yahya evaluated the results of his visit to Syria and the discussions and meetings he held with a number of ranking officials.

He pointed out that they had discussed the development and strengthening of fraternal and cooperation relations between the two countries.

They also discussed many subjects of interest to the region and the two countries.

Mr. Ben Yahya concluded his statement by noting that the people of Tunisia take great pride in the nationalist and heroic course pursued by Syria under President Hafiz al-Asad's wise leadership and in his farsightedness regarding all issues of interest to the Arab region [words indistinct].

Somali Prime Minister, Delegation Leave 10 Apr

NC1004165691 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Excerpts] Somali Prime Minister Omar Arteh Ghalib and the delegation accompanying him left Damascus at 1430 today, ending a visit which lasted for several days.

Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi was at the head of the farewell committee at Damascus international airport. [passage omitted]

Before leaving, Mr. Ghalib made a statement in which he expressed his gratitude to President Hafiz al-Asad for his hospitality. He also thanked Mr. al-Zu'bi and the Syrian officials and praised the progress he noticed in Syria, thanks to the wise and rational leadership which guarantees progress, security, stability, and prosperity in Syria. [passage omitted]

Prime Ministers al-Zu'bi and Ghalib held a meeting in the prime minister's office at 1000 today. The meeting was attended on the Syrian side by Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs; Information Minister Muhammad Salman; Finance Minister Muhammad Khalid al-Mahayni; and Muhammad Sharif, governor of Syrian Central Bank. Attending on the Somali side were Information Minister Mohammad Sheikh Mohamoud Guled; Finance Minister Sharif Zayn Abu [name and title as received]; and Central Bank Governor Ali Abdi Ahmed.

Bilateral relations and developments in Somalia were discussed during the meeting.

Commentary Stresses Implementation of Resolutions

NC1104183391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen, no one can deny that the Gulf crisis has emphasized the pressing need for peace in the Middle East. Neither can any one deny that this crisis has provided a serious opportunity to achieve peace in this region. Talk about peace is one thing, though, and working for the sake of peace and taking advantage of the existing opportunity is another. Peace is not just a slogan, a banner, or words said here and there. Peace can be attained through practical steps and tangible positions on the ground that reflect genuine intentions toward peace.

We say that the question of peace in the Middle East is not just a matter of rhetoric. This question did not emerge yesterday, today, or even with the start of the Gulf crisis or in its wake. It is a very old question that has long preoccupied the world. It is the question that has

been presented more than any other to the United Nations and international organizations.

We would not be wrong if we say that the United Nations has adopted clear and frank stands on the developments in the region for more than 40 years. During this period, the UN resolutions establishing the foundations for peace on the basis of Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and recognition of the Palestinian Arab people's national rights came into being. The best known UN resolutions are probably those issued by the UN Security Council under numbers 242 and 338, which call for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories without any delay or conditions.

If peace has not been achieved in accordance with the UN resolutions and the principles of its Charter, then the party responsible for this is well known. The Arabs have accepted the international body's resolutions and called for their implementation. They have also shown their full readiness to cooperate with any international efforts to achieve peace. It is Israel that has rejected these resolutions, international legitimacy, and the responsibility of the Security Council and the United Nations toward peace.

Today, when all countries in the world are aware of the need to defuse tension and achieve peace in this sensitive part of the world, they can see with their own eyes who has been and still is raising obstacles to peace. The renewed international efforts to establish peace find themselves hindered by Israel's intransigence and pursuit of aggression and expansionism at the expense of the Arab territory. As everyone knows, Israel's policy is based on imposing the fait accompli by force. Force is also Israel's preferred method in its political and diplomatic dealings with others.

We do not believe there is anyone who has not realized that Israel has so far arrogantly refused to implement any of the key UN and Security Council resolutions on the Middle East and the Palestine question, and that this refusal had, until recently, received the protection and support of various countries, support and protection which aborted the peace process. Nor has this protection and support served these countries, which are now trying to achieve the peace that should have been achieved a long time ago.

Those who tried separate and partial solutions have come to realize the futility of such efforts. Nowadays, even the United States has recognized that peace can only be achieved on the basis of UN resolutions, as U.S. President George Bush said in his address to the nation a few weeks ago when he stressed the importance of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

How to achieve peace in the Middle East is not a mystery. The problem's history, complications, and framework are known. The party responsible for the continuation and exacerbation of the crisis in the region is also known. Any effort that ignores the basis for peace and the means to achieve it—namely, Resolutions 242, 338, and 344—is doomed to failure. The reason for this is not hard to find. How can a just peace be established if the rights of the owners of the occupied land are not recognized? How can a just peace be established if the rights of those who have inalienable rights are not recognized? What is the meaning of a just peace if injustice continues to exist and evil continues to prevail?

In any event, if there is to be serious work for the sake of peace, then the horse must be put before the cart and not the other way around. Any talk about secondary, marginal, or detailed issues that does not include a solution of the question through the UN resolutions and the international conference, seems to be an attempt not to achieve peace, but to waste time, ignore the existing opportunity, and mislead public opinion.

We have supported the establishment of a just peace, and we continue to do so. We have opposed aggression by any party, and we continue to do so. We welcome any international effort to achieve a just and comprehensive solution in this region. This, however, can only be achieved through the UN resolutions and on the basis of international legitimacy and the clauses of its charters which guarantee right, justice, and fairness to all.

This has been our view and it is one that has been proved correct in the past. This is the view to which we cling today and to which we will cling tomorrow.

Press on Mideast Peace, Israeli Intransigence

NC1104083491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 11 Apr 91

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Our Clear Viewpoint on Peace," AL-BA'TH says that no one can deny that the Gulf crisis stressed the need for peace in the Middle East. In addition, no one can ignore the fact that this crisis provided a serious opportunity to achieve peace in this region. Peace is not just a slogan. Peace can be achieved through practical steps that can become a reality. We would not be unrealistic if we said that the United Nations has adopted clear and frank stands on developments in the region for more than 40 years. These stands resulted in UN resolutions establishing the grounds for peace based on Israel's withdrawal from all of the occupied territories and recognition of the Arab Palestinian people's national rights.

The paper continues its editorial by saying that when countries realize the importance of eliminating causes of war and tension and achieving peace in this sensitive part of the world, they will see who was and remains the obstacle to peace, which is impeded by Israel's intransigence and its craving for aggression and expansion. The paper adds: Thus, it becomes clear that the question of peace in the Middle East is not a puzzle or a riddle. Any efforts to establish peace and to search for ways to attain it are doomed to be a complete failure. [sentence as heard]

The paper concludes by saying that we were, and still are, advocates of a durable peace and are against aggression

by any party whatsoever. We welcome any international effort to seek a just and comprehensive solution in this region, but this will not be possible and cannot be attained except on the basis of UN resolutions and international legitimacy.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH published comments entitled "Israel Undermines the Peaceful Efforts" in its "Causes" column. The paper says that at a time when international efforts in general, and American efforts in particular, intensify to find a suitable starting point in looking for a just and comprehensive settlement for the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Israeli officials' voices grow louder and their stands, which overtly and publicly hinder any search for peace, vary. The paper adds: Therefore, day after day the international community becomes increasingly aware that Israel is the only party to reject peace. It even tries to frustrate the impetus in the ongoing and successive contacts and consultations that are searching for a starting point for a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is the world's most serious issue.

Under the title "Standard Criteria," AL-THAWRAH asks: Will the Gulf example be standardized throughout the world and will international legitimacy, as represented by the UN resolutions, be the sole arbiter in resolving the various conflicts and disputes in the Third World, including the Arab-Israeli conflict"

The paper adds: Israeli officials have had no qualms in making statements affirming that Israel will continue its occupation of the occupied Arab territories, refuse to withdraw from them, and ignore the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. In all of this, Israel does not hide its belief in its own concepts of peace, which in its view is to force the Arabs to accept its occupation of the Arab territories and liquidate the Palestinian issue.

The paper concludes by saying that the Arabs, who demonstrated their commitment to implementing the international principles, charters, and resolutions, now put Washington's credibility to the test of not rewarding the aggressor. Israel is the aggressor occupying the land and usurping rights. Pressure must be brought against it so that it will comply with the new international concepts. Yet Israel is making outdated statements, particularly with respect to goodwill. It is Israel, however, who is required to prove its goodwill toward peace.

Al-Asad Discusses Lebanon, Iraq in Speech

NC1104204191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1815 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad delivered a speech at the iftar banquet [marking the breaking of the fast] he hosted last night in honor of ulema and clergymen on the occasion of the month of Ramadan. In his speech, the president discussed a number of issues of interest to the homeland and citizens.

The president affirmed that Arabism is our body and Islam is our spirit. We Arabs have been elevated by Islam. We have taken a great deal from Islam and given the world a great deal. With Islam, we have overcome the evils in the world.

His excellency said interaction between Arabism and Islam has existed ever since the emergence of Islam. He pointed out that Islam came for the whole world.

His excellency the president talked about the absence of racism from Arabism. He said: When we refer to ourselves as Arabs, this has nothing to do with purity of blood and race. We in Syria, for example, have our ancient roots. During the Islamic period, all Muslims took part in building the Islamic history. We used to act as a single entity.

President Hafiz al-Asad added: What Arabism means to us is who actually lives on this Arab land, who speaks the Arabic language, who lives our hopes with us. We are all Arabs. This is our land, these are our hopes. We have our hopes and pains, our short-term, medium-term, and long-term aspirations. We have our own concerns and interests.

The president discussed the campaign waged by foreign circles hostile to Arabs and Muslims under the pretext of the danger of Islamic fundamentalism, which portrays this fundamentalism as evil. The president warned against being taken in by this campaign. Fundamentalism means adherence to Islam, and Islam means goodness, peace, and love.

The president pointed to the use of the slogan of Islam by some who are not known for their religious feelings for their wrongful activities, which harm the Arabs and Muslims. In this way, they present the image and action desired by our enemies, the enemies of the Arabs and the Muslims. In other words, they give them a golden opportunity, the likes of which they had never imagined.

The president discussed the situation in the region and said: Israel and those who support it, could never have imagined a golden opportunity like the one they were given so suddenly by a Muslim Arab ruler.

The president also discussed Lebanon and Syria's efforts to avert sectarian massacres there, to save Lebanon from the 17 May agreement, and to block Israel, which wanted to exploit the situation in Lebanon for its own interests hostile to Lebanon, Syria, and the Arabs, and to realize the known Zionist designs in Lebanon.

The president also discussed Syria's support for the Lebanese national resistance against the Israeli occupation and its role in Israel's withdrawal from the territories it occupied in Lebanon.

The president recalled Syria's principled stand regarding the war waged by the Iraqi regime against Iran and the efforts it exerted to stop the war from the beginning. The president also talked about the Gulf crisis and Syria's efforts to save Iraq from its present ordeal and to protect Syria from the materialization of the designs of the enemies of the Arabs.

The president reviewed the fraternal and honest efforts Syria exerted to save Iraq from the likely consequences of its invasion of Kuwait. He reminded those attending his speech during the emergency Arab summit in Cairo and his message to the president of the Iraqi regime, calling on him to withdraw from Kuwait and promising that Syria would stand beside Iraq if it were attacked after withdrawing, as the possibility of such an attack existed.

Border Village Residents Cited on Iraqi Bombing

NC0204095791 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0845 GMT 2 Apr 91

[Text] Al-Hasakah, northeast Syria, 2 Apr (SANA)—The residents of al-Malikiyah villages located in the northernmost areas in Syria have said that the Iraqi area of Khabur and the villages surrounding it were the target of intensive bombardment by the Iraqi regime's loyalist troops. They added that they saw the day before yesterday [31 March] helicopter gunships dropping illumination bombs on villages in northern Iraq and indiscriminately bombing residents of these areas, causing the death of scores of civilians.

The residents of the border villages went on to say that they heard the voices of Iraqis wounded in the bombardment asking to be rescued, whereas some of these residents managed to flee after crossing the Tigris River. Those who managed to flee arrived in al-Malikiyah, where they were hospitalized and provided with the necessary medical treatment.

Citizens who saw the bombardment said that the regime's troops were bombing residents in the villages around Zakho in a bid to retake it from the hands of the popular forces.

Those fleeing the ferocious battles in villages in northern Iraq said that the revolutionaries are valiantly defending the city of Zakho, which has been fiercely attacked since the night of 31 March.

Editorial Urges End of Regime To Stop 'Tragedies'

JN1204103091 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0755 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, 12 Apr (SANA)—In its editorial today headlined "Coming Out of the Ordeal," AL-THAWRAH says that the Iraqi people are paying with their blood and resources the price of Saddam Husayn clinging to power. The paper asserts that what is preoccupying everyone's heart and mind at this stage is how to end the Iraqi people's suffering.

The paper asks: For whose interest are the Iraqi people being massacred in a comprehensive genocide? Can the will of the people be ignored and the people themselves be liquidated only to maintain Saddam's grip on power?

The paper concludes: The tragedy is harsh, and the setback is bitter. The presence of the Baghdad ruler has become associated only with killing, death, massacres, and terror after a series of defeats and disasters. All disasters and afflictions will cease with the end of the regime, and there is no doubt that the downfall of the Baghdad ruler will open the door to Iraq to solve all its problems and end its tragedies. The Iraqi people know how to end this ordeal.

Commentary Urges Standards to Mideast Crisis

JN1204100391 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0800 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, 12 Apr (SANA)—In a commentary today headlined "The Difficult Test," AL-THAWRAH says that the international community is once again being put to a difficult test after the Gulf crisis, caused by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The present test is the result of (?Israel's position on peace) in the Middle East.

The paper adds: Through its unchanging position against peace, Israel is not only challenging international will, but is also placing itself above this will and putting the entire international community to a difficult test—which it should face with the same firmness it showed during the Gulf crisis.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Just as international legitimacy has succeeded in resolving the Gulf crisis in record time by pressuring the party that sparked the crisis, international legitimacy is asked to resolve the Middle East crisis by applying those very same standards, so that it will not be said that international legitimacy uses two different standards. This is also because the issue of peace is one issue, and those who spurn peace must be punished because of their arrogance and disdain. If international legitimacy succeeds in this effort, it will have passed the most difficult test in its history.

Afghanistan

Mujahidin Claim Capture of Border District

BK1104162291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1613 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Islamabad, April 11 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance said Thursday they had captured the District of Dasht-e Archi bordering the Soviet Union in their second major victory after liberating Khowst 10 days ago.

No independent confirmation of the guerrilla claim was available.

According to MIDIA news agency which belongs to the guerrilla's Pakistan-based interim government, about 100 Kabul government soldiers were taken prisoner in the district which is in Konduz Province.

Mujahidin from Takhar and Konduz captured the district in a "well coordinated" offensive, the report said.

The Afghan resistance, who are fighting to topple President Najibullah and establish an Islamic government in Afghanistan, took the garrison city of Khowst on March 31.

Rebel, Kabul Forces Said Fortifying in Lowgar

BK1204113891 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan say mujahidin and the Kabul regime forces have been fortifying their positions in Lowgar Province following the fall of Khowst to mujahidin. An AGENCY AFGHAN PRESS report says mujahidin attacked a military supply convoy of the Kabul troops near Mohammad Agha town and the convoy fled toward Kabul leaving behind the wreckage of a tank while three trucks loaded with supplies were captured by the mujahidin.

Kabul Garrison Captures Extremists' Weapons

LD1104165391 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Units in the general command of Kabul garrison today dealt shattering blows to those individuals of the extremist groups who wanted to disrupt peaceful life around Kabul province by violating the cease-fire. According to the BIA military section, a number of extremists were crushed in these operations. Some 19 warheads of Sakr-20 and Sakr-30 missiles; 3 rocket missile shells; 97 sidearm rounds; 33 rocket launcher rounds; 7 boxes of light weapons, and a foodstuff store were seized. Hideouts of the extremist groups were destroyed. [passage omitted]

Pakistan Told To Halt Felling, Stealing Timber

LD1104190691 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Pakistan's charge d'affaires in Kabul was summoned to the Foreign Ministry today. A strong protest from the government of the Republic of Afghanistan was conveyed to him by the director of the ministry's first political section. The text reads as follows:

Reliable information says that under the supervision of Pakistan Government authorities, the felling of timber and its transfer to Pakistan in Konarha and Nurestan provinces by the Pakistani puppets resumed on 20 February 1991. These authorities intend to fell all the trees in Konarha and Nurestan province within four months. The felling of timber is continuing in Peych, Chapa Dara, Diwagal, Wama, Kamdeysh and Barg-e Matal regions; it is being transferred to Pakistan by way of Dangam and Ghashi Kandaw.

The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan strongly protests this action by the Pakistani puppets, who are engaged in plundering the natural resources of the people of the Republic of Afghanistan in contravention of the norms of international relations and interstate rights, and demands that the Pakistan Government prevent the plundering of the natural resources of the people of Afghanistan.

Khaliqyar, CSFR Envoy Discuss Relations

LD1004195491 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The Prime Ministry press department reports that esteemed Fazl Haq Khaliqyar, prime minster of the Republic of Afghanistan, today received His Excellency Vladimir Vavra, Czechoslovak ambassador to Kabul. In their meeting the ambassador presented a letter from Czechoslovak Prime Minster Marian Calfa to esteemed Khaliqyar.

His excellency the Czechoslovak prime minister expressed a desire for the convocation of a joint commission on trade, economic, and scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries.

In accordance with an agreement between the two countries, negotiations between delegations of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Federal Republic of Czechoslovakia are due to be held in Prague.

Prime Minister Khaliqyar spoke about economic cooperation between the two countries, and expressed a readiness by the Afghan side to take part in the negotiations of the joint commission on economic and technical cooperation.

Bangladesh

Minister Briefs Parliament on Journalists Strike

BK1104131091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The state minister for information, M.N. Huda, has said the present government is determined to protect the freedom of press and the journalists. He was making a statement in Jatiya Sangsad [Parliament] on Thursday [11 April] about a three-hour token strike observed by journalists Wednesday. The journalists have been demanding reinstatement of their sacked colleagues in the DAINIK DESH and the BANGLADESH OBSERVER and seeking redress of the grievances of working journalists in some newspapers.

Describing the newspaper as the mirror and the journalists as the conscience of the nation, the state minister said the government wants amicable settlement of all problems facing the newspaper industry through negotiations. He said appropriate steps will be taken against any move for harming the interest of the working journalists.

The state minister recalled the glorious role of newsmen during anti-autocracy movement. He said the leader of the house, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who is also in charge of the Ministry of Information, has directed to release 15 million taka on account of advertisement and raise of another one million taka for the BANGLADESH TIMES exclusively so that concerned newspapers can pay out the dues of the journalists.

PRC's Wang Confers With Industries Minister

BK1004154291 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The visiting Chinese vice minister for foreign economic relations and trade, Mr. Wang Wendong, discussed with Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan in Dhaka Tuesday the issues relating to cooperation between the two countries in the field of industry. Setting up of a urea factory in joint venture and leather processing unit under a buy-back arrangement came up for discussions. Earlier, Mr. Wang visited the site of under construction Shambhuganj bridge at Mymensingh which is a Chinese-funded project.

Cooperation Agreements Announced

BK1204160291 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Bangladesh and China have signed an agreed minutes to expand and diversify the cooperation between them. China is to continue barter trade with Bangladesh at least for the next one year as a special consideration. The agreement was reached at the sixth meeting of the China-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission [JEC] which concluded in Dhaka today.

China has also agreed to fund a 25-bed modern hospital in Dhaka. A protocol to this effect was signed.

A China-Bangladesh joint venture bicycle chain manufacturing unit with an annual capacity of producing 500,000 pieces will also be established.

The Chinese side agreed to finance construction of a bridge over river Mahananda at Chapai Nawabganj after completion of the ongoing Shambhuganj bridge. A contract to this effect was signed during the JEC talks. Work on the proposed Mahananda bridge, the third Chinese-aided road bridge, is expected to begin in November this year.

The Chinese side also agreed to provide technology for the development of Bangladesh's sericulture and silk industry.

The seventh meeting of JEC will be held in Beijing next year. The Chinese team has left for home.

India

Shekhar Rules Out Deploying Army During Polls

BK1104161691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The prime minister has ruled out deployment of the Army during the ensuing Lok Sabha elections. In an interview to Iranian television, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, said legally the Army cannot be deployed for polling duty and his government will abide by the legal provisions. He however said if the situation demands, the Army can be used to assist the civil authorities. But Mr. Chandra Shekhar maintained that he does not see any such apprehensions in the near future.

On an alliance with the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], the Janata Dal-S leader said his party does not have any plan and he does not see any common point between the Janata Dal-S and the BJP.

Opposition Parties Angry About Punjab Election

BK1204074791 Hong Kong AFP in English 0721 GMT 12 Apr 91

[By Anil Penna]

[Text] New Delhi, April 12 (AFP)—India's caretaker prime minister drew the opposition's wrath Friday for failing to heed calls to delay a potentially bloody election in Punjab. Critics described Chandra Shekhar's move to recommend polls as an invitation to further terror in the northern state—torn by eight years of Sikh separatist violence which has cost more than 12,000 lives.

The decision, seen by sympathetic observers as a calculated risk, was expected to be lauded by Sikh politicians in the state, which has not had a government of its own since May 1987. Mr. Shekhar recommended Thursday that the election commission organise polls for Punjab's

13 seats in Lok Sabha—the elected lower house of parliament—as well as the state's defunct legislative assembly.

The commission has to decide whether the Punjab polls should be held at the same time as nationwide elections to parliament next month. "It is an irresponsible decision," said Vithal Gadgil, spokesman for former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) party. "The conditions in Punjab are not conducive for elections."

"These elections will be held at gunpoint," he warned. "The ballot will not reveal the true verdict of the people." Mr. Shekhar's caretaker cabinet decided to hold elections in Punjab and the northeastern state of Assam—also troubled by anti-Indian insurgency—after consulting their governors here Thursday.

Opposition parties had been in favour of reviving the political process in Assam, believing the situation there to be less serious than in Punjab. "Chandra Shekhar has taken a great risk, and we cannot imagine why," J.P. Mathur, general secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party), said.

"The time is inopportune," he said. "A majority of the political parties are against elections in Punjab, but Chandra Shekhar was adamant for reasons best known to him." Punjab has been under the direct rule of New Delhi since May 1987, when then-prime minister Mr. Gandhi sacked a moderate Sikh administration for failing to staunch militancy.

The subsequent years saw a sharp upsurge in separatist violence, with a record 3,600 violent deaths in 1990. Elections were held without violence in November 1989 to Punjab's seats in the short-lived ninth parliament, when the Akali Dal Party of militant-leaning Sikh politician Simranjit Singh Mann emerged as the dominant force.

However, even those polls were not entirely fair, said Harkishen Singh Surjeet, a Sikh and a senior member of the powerful Communist Party of India-Marxist. "Many candidates then could not even leave their houses to campaign because of the fear of guns," he said Friday. "When the guns are there people will be afraid to vote.

"In principle, no one is against elections," Mr. Surjeet said. "But holding elections when the situation is so bad is playing into the hands of the extremists."

"No one will be safe in such an atmosphere. Candidates, political workers, police, they are all at risk."

Citing a home ministry report, he told the press Thursday that the militants possessed a huge arsenal, including 1,800 AK-47 assault rifles, 26 light machine guns, 1,700 rockets and 140 rocket launchers. Mr. Surjeet said his party was approaching President Ramaswamy Venkataraman to reverse Mr. Shekhar's decision, while both the Congress (I) and the BJP said they would consider a boycott.

The caretaker premier believes elections would end the Sikhs' perceived discontent with New Delhi and bring the militants into mainstream politics. "Some violence is possible at any time," he said in a newspaper interview published Thursday. "Moreover there will always be elements in Punjab which will try to disrupt elections."

"You can never prevent surprise attacks like the recent one on bus passengers, but if that is the extent of the risk then elections can be held," Mr. Shekhar said. The centrist Janata Dal (People's Party) was the only major national party to approve Mr. Shekhar's move, calling it a calculated risk that was worth taking in the hope of ending the Sikhs' alienation. "I hope the people of Punjab will respond to it with their usual democratic zeal," said senior party leader Inder Gujral. "It is very important that the administration takes credible, visible measures to ensure free and fair elections."

Forward Bloc Party Issues Election Manifesto

BK1104151691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The All India Forward Bloc will delete Article 356 of the Constitution, amend the antidefection law and incorporate freedom of press as a fundamental right if voted to power. Releasing the party [election] manifesto at a press conference in Calcutta this afternoon, the secretary general, Mr. Chitta Basu, said that the left parties comprising the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], the Forward Bloc, CPI [Communist Party of India] and RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] should not shirk responsibility of joining the government at the center if they win the ensuing Lok Sabha elections. The manifesto calls for devolution of more power to the states by amending the Constitution.

Former Uttar Pradesh Congress-I MP Joins BJP

BK1104135691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Mr. Ram Nagina Mishra, a former Congress-I MP [member of Parliament] from Uttar Pradesh, has joined the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. He announced this at a news conference in New Delhi today.

Shekhar Meets Punjab, Assam, Kashmir Governors

BK1104135491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The center will have consultations with the Election Commission on holding elections in Punjab, Assam, and Jammu and Kashmir. The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, had detailed discussions with governors of three states at separate meetings in New Delhi this morning. Senior officials of the central government and advisers to the three governors took part in the meetings. Briefing newsmen, the official spokesman said the Home Ministry will have further discussions with the Election Commission in a day or two before a final decision is taken in the matter.

The Congress-I has urged the Election Commission not to hold elections in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and Assam. A party delegation today met the chief election commissioner, Mr. T.N. Seshan, in New Delhi and told him that conditions prevailing in these three states are such that no free and fair elections are possible. The deputy election commissioner, Dr. R.P. Bhalla, told newsmen that the commission is yet to form an opinion and is in touch with the center on the feasibility of the poll in the three states. Dr. Bhalla hoped that by tomorrow, a decision on holding polls in these states will be available with the commission. As already reported, the Election Commission is to announce the poll schedules for the next month's Lok Sabha poll and assembly elections in some states tomorrow.

Government Recommends Elections in Assam, Punjab

BK1104161091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Excerpt] The government has recommended to the Election Commission to hold elections in Assam and Punjab. A letter was sent to the Election Commission this evening by the union home ministry recommending that both Lok Sabha and assembly elections in the two states may be held. The dates of the polls will be announced by the Election Commission. Earlier, the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, had detailed discussions with the governors of the three states [of Assam, Punjab and Kashmir] at separate meetings this morning. Senior officials of the central government and advisers to the three governors took part in the meetings.

The prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, called on the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman, this morning. A Rashtrapati Bhavan spokesman said the two leaders held discussions for 30 minutes and described it as a routine meeting. [passage omitted]

Delhi Police Uncover Kashmir Conspiracy

BK1104132091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The Delhi Police have unearthed a major conspiracy involving persons outside the country and working at the behest of elements in Pakistan to fund militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. The Delhi police commissioner, Mr. Arun Bhagat, told newsmen in New Delhi today that three persons have been arrested in this connection. Over 16 lakh rupees and incriminating documents have been recovered from them. The money and the documents were intended to be delivered to terrorists in the Kashmir valley.

Kidnappers' Demands Rejected; Swedes Still Held

BK1104131891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] India and Sweden have rejected the demands put forward by Kashmiri militants for releasing of two kidnapped Swedish nationals in the valley. Briefing newsmen, the official spokesman said in New Delhi today that the militant outfit which claimed responsibility for the kidnapping has demanded that the teams of the United Nations and the Human Rights Organization should visit the Kashmir valley. The spokesman said Amnesty International has also said that it will not comply with the demand of the kidnappers to send a mission to the valley. Meanwhile, efforts by the center and the government of Jammu and Kashmir are continuing to secure the release of the two Swedes.

Policeman Among Two Killed by Kashmir Militants

BK1104145491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] In the Kashmir valley, two persons, including a DSP [deputy superintendent of police], were killed and two injured when militants opened fire on senior civil and police officials in Jama Masjid area this morning. The officials were making arrangements for traffic regulation for Juma'tul Wida [last Friday of the month of Ramadan]. The injured have been admitted to hospital. Security forces arrested four Pakistan-trained militants from Baramula, Srinagar, and Anantnag and recovered some arms and ammunition from them. One Pakistan-trained armed militant surrendered to security forces.

Restrictions on Foreign Visits to Northeast Relaxed

BK1004150891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The center has decided in principle to relax restrictions on foreign tourists visiting the northeast region. An official spokesman told newsmen in New Delhi today this followed the recent visit of the deputy prime minister to the region and the recommendations of the ministerial committee on the northeast.

He said the Home Ministry will soon carry out a similar exercise in respect of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh.

Oil, Gas Found in Andhra Pradesh

BK0904150091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, oil and gas have been found in the first well drilled on the Mori structure about 12 km southeast of Narsapur town in the East Godavari District. The structure covering an area of 7.5 square km is likely to yield about 3 million tons of oil and an equal quantity of gas. The well is now giving about 600 barrels of oil and 92,000 cubic meters of gas per day.

Iran

Velayati Sends Note to UN on Refugee Issue

Criticizes World's 'Neglect'

NC1204070191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Report by unidentified London correspondent; date not given—recorded]

[Text] In a note submitted to the UN secretary general, our foreign minister has stated that the extensive nature of the Iraqi refugee problem, which has become incalculable in number and has surpassed all expectations, has reached a dangerous point. He said that the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians are being threatened because of the world's neglect in extending assistance to them.

In this message, which was submitted to Javier Perez de Cuellar by the Islamic Republic's representative to the United Nations, Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati describes the continuation of the unprecedented wave of Iraqi refugees as a threat to the security of countries near Iraq and throughout the region. Our foreign minister expresses the Islamic Republic's readiness to cooperate with the international community and the UN secretariat in order to help the 900,000 Iraqi refugees currently in the Islamic Republic of Iran. He also called for the secure and dignified return of these refugees to their country under UN supervision and with the guarantee that Iraq's territorial integrity will be preserved.

Dr. Velayati points out that the critical dimensions of the tragedy are such that even international and regional relief cannot meet the preliminary needs of thousands of wounded, sick, and hungry Iraqi refugees. Therefore, any type of international assistance should be sent immediately and without delay to all the refugees.

After meeting with the UN secretary general and giving him the note, Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, the Islamic Republic's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations, was interviewed by the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the interview, he said that the main point of Dr. Velayati's message is a new proposal for solving the refugee crisis through the voluntary return of these refugees to Iraq coupled with a guarantee for their security and dignity and after UN contacts with Iraqi officials to this effect. He said that on the basis of this proposal, the Iraqi Government should guarantee that the refugees will not be persecuted and that they will be safe.

Last night, shocking scenes were shown on American and European television on the wave of Iraqi refugees. These refugees can in fact be viewed as one of the largest protest marches in contemporary history against the criminal dictatorship in Baghdad. These scenes also served to demonstrate the weakness of claims by all the Western countries, especially by the White House in Washington, of providing humanitarian assistance to these refugees. This is the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran correspondent reporting from London.

IRNA Details Letter

LD1204092791 Tehran IRNA in English 0737 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] United Nations, New York, April 12, IRNA—Iran on Thursday urged the United Nations to make necessary arrangements "for the safe and dignified repatriation" of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees to their homeland "without prejudice to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq."

The call came in a letter to the U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar by Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, which was handed to the U.N. chief by Iran's permanent envoy Kamal Kharrazi.

"The influx of Iraqi refugees into the Islamic Republic of Iran and other neighboring countries has surpassed all estimates and preparations, and has reached and indeed passed dangerous levels, jeopardizing the lives of tens of thousands of innocent human beings. In addition to the unprecedented human suffering, this massive influx directly or by consequence is threatening peace and security of the recipient countries and indeed of the whole region," Velayati said in his letter.

He further urged Perez de Cuellar that the magnitude of the disaster required "immediate action by the United Nations without further delay both in order to address the basic needs of the refugees and also to arrange for their repatriation."

He said according to the latest information, about 900,000 Iraqis have crossed our borders in the south, center and the north. "Such massive flow of refugees—whose most common characteristics is not ethnicity but fear of repression, hunger, dehydration, and exhaustion of a tedious journey of several days of escaping bullets and freezing cold is bound to lead to nothing but disaster and human tragedy of unprecedented dimensions."

"Even if up-to-now negligible international assistance were to gain some badly needed momentum and substance, it is highly unlikely that any degree of local efforts and international relief aid could meet the most primary requirements of the mass of wounded, sick, hungry and cold stricken refugees and prevent the unfolding tragedy.

"...In order to provide a credible alternative to exodus and create the necessary atmosphere of confidence for voluntary return of the refugees, the process should be carried out under active and effective United Nations supervision and with UN guarantees for the safety and honor of the affected population, with the necessary safeguards to preclude any hampering—however temporary—of Iraq's territorial integrity."

Speaking to IRNA after his meeting with Perez de Cuellar, Kharrazi said that 500 of the Iraqi refugees had so far died and 14,000 of them were under medical care. He therefore called for urgent aid to the refugees in Iran and said the amount of the aid sent to Iran so far was insignificant.

Kharrazi said Iran's proposal for the repatriation of the Iraqi refugees was different from the one mooted by the European Community and Britain. He said the "safe haven" idea had raised several questions which should be answered first.

He also said he will hold consultations with his counterparts at the United Nations in the coming days to discuss the Iranian proposal. He stressed that the repatriation of the Iraqi refugees should take place under the U.N. supervision and that the United Nations should reach agreement with Iraq on guaranteeing the safety of the refugees.

Majles Delegation on 'Deplorable' Refugee Camps

NC1204074891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] A Majles delegation touring Iraqi refugee camps in western Azerbaijan has announced that the Iraqi refugees who have suffered deplorable psychological and physical hardships can only be saved by the extensive mobilization of our country's people and by international organizations and forums. The delegation made this announcement at the conclusion of their tour.

The Majles speaker's special representative criticized the silence by international forums on this immense inhuman situation and told our correspondent in Urumiyeh: Western Azerbaijan is suddenly facing a 25-percent increase in its population. This province's facilities are minimal in view of the great influx of refugees. East Azerbaijan province, as a supporting province, has also undertaken to make preparations and to extend services to Iraqi refugees in Sardasht, Mahabad, and Miandoab. In the first phase of this plan, more than 50,000 Iraqi refugees have been housed in two large camps in Mahabad and Miandoab. Relief efforts on behalf of these refugees has begun as foodstuffs, medicine, and clothing have been distributed among them as best as possible.

Border Governor on 'Desperate' Plight of Refugees

LD1104162391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian

[Text] The border town of Piranshahr is looking after about 100,000 Iraqi refugees. The governor of Piranshahr said in an interview with our correspondent: The influx of refugees is heading for Iran from five Iraqi provinces; and since the transit road from Hajj 'Umran leads to Piranshahr, a large number of the refugees have been drawn to this border region. As a result the population of Piranshahr has increased four-fold, and in order to meet the requirements of the refugees, an accommodation facility has been set up for 10,000 people in this town and another complex with the same capacity is being prepared.

The governor of Piranshahr added that the refugees's plight is very desperate. He pointed out: In view of the cold mountain climate of this region and the continuous rainfall, thousands of women, children and old people will perish, should we fail to find a solution for the influx of the people heading towards this area.

He went on: The basic needs of the Iraqi refugees in this region are food, blankets, sleeping bags, clothing, tents, transport for moving the refugees, and other essentials. He called on the Muslim people of Iran and all philanthropic people of the world to assist the Iraqi refugees as soon as possible.

Construction Jihad Official on Refugee Aid

LD1104193391 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1700 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] With the erection of a 38 meter long bridge on the Zab River, in the Sardasht border area, dozens of refugees have been saved from drowning every day. According to the head of the Construction Jihad in Western Azerbaijan, dozens of Iraqi refugees have recently lost their lives crossing the Zab and the construction of the bridge on the river has further facilitated the crossing by the refugees. Referring to the importance of the Jihad-workers in the North West in constructing the bridge, and the Western Azerbaijan Jihad workers in establishing new camps for Iraqi refugees, he added: The Construction Jihad of the province has finished the establishment of four refugee camps in Piranshahr and Sardasht. He recalled that so far 50,000 refugees have been settled in the camps by putting up tents and 50,000 more are being settled.

300 Iraqi Refugees Reportedly Die at Border

LD1104171291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Two hundred and eighty Iraqi refugees, mainly children and elderly people, have perished in the Baneh border area because of heavy, squally rain. According to a report by the Central News Unit, Iraqi refugees who have managed to reach the Baneh border strip said that the overflow of the Chuman river on the Baneh border has caused the death of at least 20 refugees who were trying to cross the river. The reports adds that masses of Iraqi refugees are still living in dreadful conditions on the Marivan and Baneh border strips, and expect more help from the world.

Officials Criticize Saddam's 'Militiarism'

LD0404202191 Tehran IRNA in English 1848 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 4, IRNA—An Iranian official criticizing the mass slaughters inside Iraq, wondered as to why the Ba'thist regime stoops to its "basest humiliation" against the U.S. forces occupying parts of the country, but "rapaciously tears its own people into shreds."

In his commentary which appeared in the Persian daily ETTELA'AT today, Vice President for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Seyyed 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani said "the obvious reason is the fear of the U.S. and Western states of another Islamic revolution. The same old fear which made them massively arm the Iraqi regime, is once again forcing them to bolster unpopular rule in Muslim Iraq."

The sole pursuit of Saddam Husayn's regime is "militarism", said Mohajerani, citing the occupation of Kuwait, "and now the vengeance upon its own people when Ba'thist rule is endangered inside Iraqi borders."

He wondered "what pleasure other than naked militarism does the Iraqi regime derive by making millions of oppressed Muslims homeless and forcing them to flee to the mountains and deserts?"

He stressed in his commentary that war against the people will not result in victory for the unpopular Ba'athist regime in Iraq.

In related news, Mohammad Javad Larijani, an advisor to the Iranian foreign minister, termed the recent resolution of the United Nations "a document of shame and a letter of submission" for Iraq.

In his weekly column in ETTELA'AT, Larijani said "In his desparate bid to survive, Saddam today shamelessly prostrates before whatever the U.S. orders. The letter of submission in fact aims at holding the people responsible for the crimes committed by Saddam."

He said "This is not a letter of Saddam's submission, but a letter of submission of the oppressed Iraqi nation."

Saddam's crimes against the people are so horrible that it is not unlikely that the Iraqis would welcome the U.S. forces if they decide to enter Baghdad, he said.

"The danger of the total loss of Iraq's independence is seriously felt today, and the people should get rid of this regime in order to preserve their independence and honour," Larijani added.

Students Protest Iraqi Crimes at UN Office

LD1104163691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran first Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] This morning a group of students from Tehran's universities took part in a protest march making their way toward the UN high commissioner's People's Office [daftar-e commissaria-ye ali-ye khalq-e sazman-e melal-e mottahed] in Tehran to condemn the crimes of the Ba'thist Iraqi regime and to declare their support for Iraqi Kurdish refugees. The marchers declared support for all innocent Iraqi refugees and expressed contempt at the killing of Iraqi people and the creation of over 3 million refugees.

In this protest march, called for by the students of the universities of Tehran, the marchers gathered in front of the UN office, chanting slogans such as: Death to the Iraqi Ba'thist regime; Iraqi refugees hoping to be assisted; and Starvation and massacres are the gifts of the blood-sucking Ba'thists. They read out a six-point resolution, each point of which was greeted with shouts of approval by the participants.

The resolution calls on the countries of the world and international forums to support the uprising by the people of Iraq and thanks the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the extensive and immediate assistance given to the refugees. It asks the caring people of the world to assist existing refugees on the borders of Iran and Turkey and strongly condemns the horrific crime of the Ba'thist regime.

Papers Call Saddam 'Source of All Evils'

LD1104075591 Tehran IRNA in English 0703 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 11, IRNA—The English language 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' and 'TEHRAN TIMES' Thursday devoted their editorials to the situation in Iraq singling out the Iraqi President Saddam Husayn as the source of all evils befalling the Persian Gulf since last September.

Referring to the continual flight to Iran of the Kurds of Iraq, and Saddam Husayn's brutal practices for suppressing disgruntled Kurds of that country KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL said "As long as Saddam Husayn and the Ba'th Party remain in power in Baghdad, the Iraqi nation will be weakened and humiliated."

It said Saddam Husayn has always blamed Iraq's neighbors for rebellion at home, but that the mass flight from Iraq of the Kurdish population proves the opposite of Saddam's claims. The commentary added that the exodus of nearly one million Iraqi Kurds to Iran during the past few weeks is proof of the trust and not of the distrust of the Iraqi people in their neighbor country Iran.

The commentary concluded by saying "The Iraqi people have no option but to continue their liberation struggle against the despotic Regime in Baghdad until they achieve ultimate victory."

The English daily TEHRAN TIMES raised points in relation with the creation of a reportedly projected "safe haven in northern Iraq to enable the Kurds to enjoy

security and...make sure that they are not directly threatened by the Baghdad regime," which, the daily said, once implemented would pave the way for a change in the geopolitical map of the region.

It said already 70,000 Muslims from southern Iraq have sought refuge with Iran because of the extreme forms of political suppression in that country.

The daily described Saddam Husayn a war criminal who should stand trial from several criminal perpetrations "incuding the setting ablaze of the Kuwaiti oil wells and pouring the oil into the Persian Gulf waters, which has caused the largest environmental disaster in recent decades."

Editorial Condemns 'Massacres' in Iraq

NC0504154091 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 18 Mar 91 pp 1, 12

[Editorial: "Bloodbath in Iraq!"]

[Text] The popular uprising in Iraq is gaining more momentum each day and the support of the military for the popular forces is gradually affecting the "balance of power."

The loyalty of the forces to the people has even gone so far as to include the most elite forces that were faithful to Saddam, and in many cities a large number of Iraqi Republican Guards have joined the popular forces. These are the same guards who formed Saddam's military arm and on whom Saddam relied to solve all problems.

Reports indicate that Saddam and his forces are not sitting idle. They are trying—by resorting to chemical weapons and massacres and even to ground-to-ground missiles—to crush the popular uprising against the Baghdad regime.

Baghdad has deployed all possible means including the monafeqin [Mojahedin-e Khalq—MKO] to help the Baghdad regime massacre the Iraqi people. Apparently, Baghdad has tried to exploit the MKO's worries about the bleak future that awaits them after Saddam's downfall to confront the uprising of the oppressed Iraqi people.

There are some sensitive and major issues that should be studied carefully:

1. The Baghdad regime's insult against Muslim sanctities during the savage suppression of the Iraqi people's uprising has taken on ugly dimensions. The mercenary Ba'thist forces do not recognize any limits in the massacre of people in the holy cities of Iraq and they even enter the holy shrines of the imams, peace be upon them, to massacre people who have sought refuge there. The Baghdad regime's insult to the Muslims' sanctities should be protested by both the governments and people of the Muslim world.

2. The Baghdad regime has set up "execution squads" and has started to hunt people down. Any suspect is simply killed without the opportunity to prove his innocence.

This situation is not confined to the religious cities. In northern Iraq a similar situation has placed the residents of cities and villages on the "precipice of death." Reports indicate that in order to prevent the fall of more cities and villages, the Baghdad military forces have taken the residents of cities hostage and have threatened to massacre them—that is women, children, and the aged—as soon as popular resistance forces enter the cities. This is not a mere allegation. It was explicitly stated by the Iraqi interior minister who warned the rebels that thousands and women and children being kept hostage would be massacred if the rebels attacked Karkuk. A bloodbath has started in Iraq; and we should accept the painful reality in any way we can that the Iraqi nation is being "mown down" by the Iraqi executioner.

3. The dimensions of the tragedy in Iraq are so vast and serious that the world and especially the Muslim world should adopt a clear stand. This does not amount to intervention in Iraq's domestic affairs. It is an expression of sympathy with the oppressed and an expression of aversion to the massacre. It is a condemnation of the massacre of women and children, and it is not intervention. This is a humanitarian duty that cannot be denied under any conditions.

It is clear that the Baghdad regime will be enraged by the expression of sympathy by nations and governments and will prefer them to remain silent about its crimes so that it can seize the opportunity, when it arises, to stifle the shouts of the Iraqi people in their throats.

All free nations and countries should feel it their duty to express sympathy with the oppressed Iraqi nation and to cry out in support, as loudly as possible, so that everyone and especially the oppressed in Iraq can hear.

4. The intensification of the uprising has terrified the Baghdad regime. Had there not been any other points to prove this, Saddam's recent speech revealed it precisely. In his speech Saddam promised to establish "democratic rule." Of course, a regime that has no qualms about massacring its people is only resorting to deceit when it promises elections and claims that it will establish "democratic rule."

Saddam hopes to use this ploy to find an opportunity for the "absolute suppression" of the people and to force the people to their knees. But if we assume—even for one moment—that Saddam is sincere in what he says, then the mere fact that he has said it shows his weakness and helplessness and his retreat from past positions.

Such promises are the last efforts of dictators in the last days of their rule. The deposed shah also promised free elections in the last days of his despicable rule and confessed that he had heard the voice of the people's revolution. But he also attributed the people's uprising to

elements outside the borders and described them as a "bunch of trouble-makers", a "bunch of hooligans", a "bunch of terrorists" with nothing to do but to create chaos.

In his last speech, the Iraqi dictator also promised democracy on the one hand and attributed the popular uprising to elements beyond the border on the other. But he did not say why he was willing to establish democracy on account of unrest that—according to him—was sparked off by a bunch of terrorists from the other side of the border. Saddam says that the recent uprising was fomented by individuals on the other side of the border. But he did not say on whose side the people are on—Saddam's side or on the opposite side? If they are on Saddam's side, then there is no reason to promise democracy for the sake of an uprising by only a few. But if they are on the other side, then this promise is a big confession by the Baghdad regime that Saddam's rule is anti-popular.

The issue is very clear and the Baghdad regime, like all bloodthirsty dictators who have reached the end of the line, is in an impasse and has no alternative but surrender. If he does not accept this reality and strives to alter things by massacring people, tomorrow the people of Iraq will impose realities on him with greater force.

Paper Hopes Bangladesh Will Introduce Islamic Law

NC0504171391 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 26 Mar 91 pp 2, 11

[Editorial: "Bangladesh Launches Into Democratic Epoch"]

[Excerpts] Democracy has come to Bangladesh after years of struggle against successive dictatorships, often with only a veneer of democracy. This Muslim country ushered in a democratic era with the holding of general elections on February 27, this year. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh is a country with ample natural resources, including natural gas. What the country needs to come out of the economic morass in which it has foundered for so long and bring prosperity and wellbeing to its millions, is an honest administration which needs to launch well-thought-out development plans to be carried out with assistance of the common people.

Bangladesh and the Islamic Republic of Iran enjoy the most cordial of relations and it has been the open policy of Tehran to extend a hand towards the majority-Muslim nation and a Third World country that deserves a prominent place among the nations in this part of the world and the world at large. It follows that Bangladesh can expect the fullest and sincerest cooperation from the Islamic regime here.

It is our hope that Begum Zia will be successful in establishing a strong government capable to tackling the economic problems of her country and guiding her nation to a brighter future in the years to come. In the meantime, we expect that the new government of Bangladesh will spare no effort to introduce and implement the Islamic law in the country where 99 percent of the total population are Muslims.

* War Damages Estimated at $900 Billion

91AS0764C London KEYHAN in Persian 28 Mar 91 p 4

[Text] The 8-year Iran-Iraq war inflicted damages on Iran totalling $900 billion. Given this calculation, if we estimate the oil revenues of Iran at $12 billion a year, in order to repair the damages resulting from the war with Iraq, about 75 years of the foreign currency revenues obtained from oil exports must be spent.

According to a report from Ankara by REUTERS NEWS AGENCY, Hasan Ebrahim Habibi, the vice president of the Islamic Republic, said to reporters on his recent visit to Turkey that the issue of keeping a few Iraqi airplanes as partial payment of war reparations from that country is a baseless rumor. The vice president added: "This is a false and misleading point, and the rumors that are spread in this connection are not true."

Hasan Ebrahim Habibi said to foreign reporters: "Iranian war reparations have been estimated at $900 billion, and we shall ask for them." He added: "The damages inflicted on Iran during the war are so heavy that keeping a few used and damaged airplanes cannot even compensate one-thousandth for them."

* Revolution Guard Name Remains Unchanged

91AS0764D London KEYHAN in Persian 21 Mar 91 p 2

[Text] The last issue of KEYHAN published an incorrect report quoting the Islamic Republic radio concerning a change in the name of the Guard Corps. The Islamic Republic radio reporter at the Majles had reported on the ratification of three articles of the employment law of the Guards Corps in such a way that the report clearly indicated a name change of the "Guards Corps of the Islamic Revolution" to the term Guard; however, once the text of the above-mentioned bill was obtained, it became clear that the name of the "Guards Corps of the Islamic Revolution" and other military security agencies have not changed, but that only in the above-mentioned bill, in order to be brief, the term "Guard" was substituted for the full name of the Guards Corps.

* Appointments to Various Offices Announced

91AS0764A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVAI in Persian 20 Mar 91 p 4

[Text] In a decree issued by Dr. Mostafa Mo'in, Engineer Mehdi Mirshamsi, the former director of the national testing agency, was praised for his services, and Dr. Hoseyn Rahimi was appointed the new director of this agency.

In accordance with another decree issued by the Minister of Culture and Higher Education, Dr. Mehdi Golabi, the chancellor of Tabriz University, was appointed a member of the board of trustees of the Academy of Sciences of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Abdollah Nuri, the Minister of Interior, appointed the following governors for several cities:

Yusof Davudi, governor of Farsan; Nader Jalali, governor of Borujen; Ebrahim Hojjati, governor of Dargaz; Mohammad Sobhani, governor of Maku; Seyyed 'Ali Akbar Mirseyfi-Na'ini, governor of Tabas; Mohammad Hoseyn A'rabi-Gowqani, governor of Mobarakeh; and Majid Khodabakhsh, deputy governor general for developmental affairs of Eastern Azarbaijan.

The new chief of police of Tehran was appointed. In ceremonies for the purpose of introducing Mansur Tahbash as the new chief of police of Tehran at the Tehran Police Department, the services of General Omidian, the former chief of police of Tehran, were praised.

In a decree issued by 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the minister of foreign affairs, Ahmad Dehnovi was appointed as the new charge d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Congo.

In separate decrees issued by Mohammad Hashemi, the director general of the Voice and Vision, Mohammad Sadeq Pahlavanzadeh was appointed to the position of the director of the radio center in Yasuj and Mohammad Javad Moradi as the director of the Voice and Vision center in Khorramabad, and they began their duties.

* More Appointments

91IS0764B Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVAI in Persian 13 Mar 91 p 4

[Text] "Shabani" was introduced as the new commander of the 10th army of Nabi-ye Akram of the Guards Corps by Mostafa Izadi, the commander of the ground forces of the Guards Corps.

In a decree by Engineer Mohammad Sa'idi-Kia, the Minister of Roads and Transport, Engineer Mohammad Sa'idnezhad was appointed as the deputy minister of roads and transport of that ministry.

Nepal

1,340 Candidates Contesting General Elections

BK1104163791 Hong Kong AFP in English 1629 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] Kathmandu, April 11 (AFP)—About 1,340 candidates—including 75 women—will be vying for 205 seats in Nepal's house of representatives in the upcoming general elections, an election commission official said Thursday.

The candidates present Nepal's 11.1 million eligible voters a choice of 21 political parties on May 12, with the strongest contest expected between the Nepali Congress and the United Marxist-Leninist factions of the Nepal Communist Party.

The Nepali Congress—headed by Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattari—has 204 candidates and the United Marxist-Leninist factions—led by Mana Mohan Adhikari—have 192 candidates contesting in the elections, the election commission official said.

"We are highly hopeful of gaining the absolute majority of the total 205 seats, but our target is to get a two-thirds majority so that we can bring about changes to .. The constitution," said Nepali Congress Supreme Leader Ganesh Man Singh.

He said full campaigning would kick off Sunday.

The third-largest group is the National Democratic Party, loyal to the former one-party (Panchayat) government which was deposed last year and headed by former Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa. It will field 168 candidates including Mr. Thapa himself, the official said.

The pro-Panchayat and royalist National Democatic Party, will field 163 candidates led by another former prime minister, Lokendra Bahadur Chand.

Ten other parties, including the remaining factions of the Nepal Communist Party and the pro-Indian Sadbhawana (Nepal Goodwill) Party from the Indian-border regions, filed about 100 nominations, the official said.

Another 14 parties will field about five candidates each, he said.

Twenty-three other parties registered in Nepal have either withdrawn their candidates or not filed nominations at all.

The Nepalese electorate counts 900,000 18-year-olds among its ranks.

About 260 candidates withdrew their nominations before the deadline.

Pakistan

Sharif Orders Dispatch of Relief Aid for Kurds

BK1104164691 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, has ordered the immediate dispatch of three plane-loads of relief goods to Iran and Turkey for the Kurd refugees. This has been ordered by the prime minister because he has been deeply distressed at the magnitude of human sufferings as a result of massive exodus of refugees from Iraq. The goods consist of tents, blankets, and medicines.

The prime minister appreciated the efforts of Iran and Turkey for the relief of the refugees from Iraq.

Islamic Law Bills Introduced in National Assembly

BK1104164091 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The bill for the enforcement of Shari'ah [Islamic law] has been introduced in the National Assembly. Piloted by the minister of state in charge of law, justice and parliamentary affairs, the bill was referred to an 11-member select committee for its report to the house in a month. Later the house was adjourned sine die.

The Shari'ah bill declares that the Shari'ah as laid down in the holy Koran and sunna [practices of Prophet Mohammad] shall be the supreme law of Pakistan. It requires all Muslim citizens of Pakistan to faithfully observe Shari'ah.

It places upon the state the duty to take certain steps in this direction. The state will make effective arrangements for the teachings of Shari'ah and Islamic jurisprudence and ensure Islamic system of justice.

It will bring about police reforms to ensure that the life, honor, liberty, property and rights of citizens are protected. It will make effective provisions by law to combat the offences of corruption of all sort. Steps will be taken to set up a baitul mal [public fund] for providing assistance to the poor, needy, widows, orphans, and the destitutes.

The government will take effective legal and administrative measures to eradicate obscenity, vulgarity, and other known vices and enact laws to protect the ideology, solidarity, and integrity of Pakistan.

It will undertake legal measures to prevent the possession and display of illicit arms.

In the economic sector, a commission consisting of economists, bankers, jurists, ulemas [religious scholars], and elected representatives will be appointed with the duty to recommend measures within three years, including suitable alternatives, by which the Islamic economic system could be established. It will also oversee the whole process of elimination of riba [interest] from every sphere of economic activity.

Steps will be taken to ensure that the education system is based on Islamic values of learning, teaching, and character building. A commission of educationists, jurists, experts, ulemas, and elected representatives will be appointed to make recommendations for the purpose.

Opposition member, Syed Zafar Ali Shah and Chaudhury Aitzaz Ahsan, wanted the special committee to be expanded in view of the importance of the bill. The minister of state, Chaudhury Amir Hussain, explained that other members as well and experts from outside the house will be invited by the special committee for consultations and any improvement in the bill.

The minister of state in charge for law and charge and parliamentary affairs has said the government has introduced the Shari'ah bill in the assembly for the enforcement of Islamic system in the country, while a package of amendments in the Constitution and other laws will be brought before parliament in the light of the Shari'ah bill. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, he explained the salient feature of the Shari'ah bill and said it was brought before the house after obtaining consensus from the people belonging to different spheres of national life as well as the parliamentary party of the IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad]. The select committee of the National Assembly to which the bill has been referred will consult members of the National Assembly to know their point of view.

Paper Reports Sharif 10 Apr Parliamentary Address

BK1104134791 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 11 Apr 91 pp 1, 6

[By diplomatic correspondent Shahid Saleem]

[Text] Islamabad, April 10—Reflecting aspirations, wishes and expectations of the people, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has announced revolutionary measures to transform Pakistan into a real Islamic welfare, progressive and democratic state where-in Shari'ah will be enforced. Koran and Sunnah [Practices of Prophet Mohammad] will be made supreme law of the land and basic reforms in administrative, judicial, legal, economic, educational, police and social set-up will be introduced.

In his historic address to the joint sitting of Parliament on Wednesday afternoon the Prime Minister said that "we want to eliminate hunger, disease, corruption, injustices and exploitations of all kinds and build a strong, prosper and viable Pakistan."

Unveiling the package of reforms and tracing the history of one thousand year long struggle of the Muslims of South Asia for enforcement of Islamic order, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that his decisions were meant to change the destiny of the nation.

These measures he said were in line with our commitment to the people and the manifesto we promised to the nation during the election campaign. "There is no dispute over the enforcement of Islamic order in the country because the people of Pakistan are true Muslims," said Mr. Nawaz Sharif.

The Prime Minister also announced the setting up of a 'Baitul Mal' [public fund] to help the poor and needy, adding that it was responsibility of the state that it should look after the downtrodden.

The Prime Minister said that the objectives of the creation of Pakistan were not fulfilled in the last 42 years which resulted in the accumulation of massive problems, confronting the nation today. Corruption, dishonesty and injustices have engulfed the entire society. These

problems, he said cannot be allowed to linger on and his government has decided to face all the problems on merit.

My government, he said does not believe in the policy of 'status quo' and we will respond to the wind of change in a positive manner. Mr. Nawaz Sharif said "we will have to accept the challenges of 21 century as there is no other way out."

The Prime Minister said his government will introduce a number of economic, administrative, educational and social reforms to rid the masses from the shackles of hunger, disease, corruption and injustices.

This, he said, is only possible through the active cooperation and support of all the Pakistanis.

The Prime Minister said a number of legislative measures will be introduced in the Parliament to bring about an encompassing changes in the society.

He said the government has prepared laws to bring an end to the Kalashnikov culture in the country and to eliminate obscenity and vulgarity from the society.

A bill has also been prepared to bring an end to corruption and adulteration. These legislative measures he said will soon be presented in the Parliament.

The Prime Minister said that high powered courts would be set up at every level to eradicate bribery and corruption.

'Munsif [subordinate] courts' would be set up from the union council level to district level for the dispensation of speedy justice in the country. All types of cases including criminal and civil nature will be in their jurisdiction. Criminal cases shall be decided within one month and only one appeal will be allowed against the first judgement to save poor people from oppression of the wealthy persons who linger on the cases for years together thus denying justice to the poor, the Prime Minister said.

Mr. Nawaz Sharif said that his government would never compromise on the honour of the country. Therefore, he said a bill will also be introduced to give deterrent punishment to those who indulge in abusing the country.

The Prime Minister also announced that administrative setup of the police would be changed and reorganisation would be carried out to enable it to serve the people. In its present form the police, he said has given protection only to the forces of 'status quo'.

He also announced that a law providing for life imprisonment and confiscation of property for the offence of kidnapping for ransom was also being enacted.

The Prime Minister said that as a nation "we wasted forty-four years in dilating on the genesis of creation of the country instead of strengthening the motherland".

He said there was no ambiguity regarding the objective of the creation of the country. Its very concept came to the fore on the basis of religion, culture, and civilisation of the Muslims. The Muslims of the sub-continent waged long struggle for protection of religious identity and its promotion.

He said that the great thinker of Pakistan Allama Iqbal presented a clear concept before the nation. Different movements of the Muslims mingled like riverines in this concept, harmonising the Muslims in the sub-continent into a cherished dream which was revealed by Allama Iqbal in his address to the Muslim League session at Allahabad in 1930. The Allama had said,

"In case we desire Islam to survive as a civilised force in this country, then it is imperative for it to converge in a specific area".

The Prime Minister said the same dream found expression from the Father of the Nation Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah at Sabi darbar in 1948.

The Quaid had said that it was his faith that deliverence lay in following the golden code of life which was disseminated to us by the greatest law-giver Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him). "Let us lay the foundation of democracy on this real idealism of Islam and its principles." He said adding "our God Almighty has ordained to us to work out decisions to run the government through mutual consultations. [no close quote as published]

He said that saying of the thinker and founder of the country made the aims of the long drawn Pakistan struggle of the Muslims fully explicit.

He said following the independence this struggle moved still further and entered the constituent assembly in the shape of Objectives Resolution.

On this occasion Shaheed-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan had stated that Pakistan was created with the sole aim of enabling the Muslims to order their lives in accordance with Islamic teachings. "We want to show it to the world that Islam was panacea to all problems facing the humanity in the modern times".

Mr. Nawaz Sharif said that after creation of Pakistan, the Objectives Resolution was presented in the constituent assembly and with that the process in that direction stopped.

However, the Muslims never strayed even for one moment from the aim of enforcement of Islam. Their struggle continued in one form or the other and it burst as a storm in 1977 when every street and 'mahallah' [neighborhood] of the country resounded with the slogans of Nizam-i-Mustafa [Islamic system].

He said as its consequence the Objectives Resolution was incorporated in the constitution as its preamble in 1985. But it did not fulfil the dream of enforcement of Islamic system.

He said Maulana Samiul Haq and Qazi Abdul Latif presented a private bill in the Senate which was passed with certain amendments. It was described by the President Ghulam Ishaq Khan as a significant progress towards enforcement of Islamic system. However, he said the bill could not be passed by the National Assembly in the stipulated period of 90 days.

He said when his government assumed office the ideological state of Pakistan was still devoid of its real foundations.

Islam, he said, created Pakistan which in turn made constitutions but Islam found no place in them.

He said as he reviewed the situation to charter his agenda he was faced with stark reality of inheriting nothing but loans, which were multipled by one government after the other.

The Prime Minister said the burden of these loans was so huge that one was forced to think if their repayment was possible at all.

He said his government was only five months old and this short period was insufficient to charter its agenda. He said instead of passing time by putting such issues on the back-burner, he believed to take bull by the horns with courage.

He said we owed it to those Muslims struggled for one thousand years, to the sacrifices of 'shaheeds' [martyrs] and 'ghazis' [crusaders], to the new generation for preparing it for reconstruction of the 'millat' (nation) and provision of justice at doorsteps of masses and liquidate remnants of imperialist system.

He said while economic loans were paid off, but debts of realm of ideology and spiritualism made the nations poor.

He said nations could survive without economic resources but faced destruction without aims and objectives.

He said our case was strange. The aims was distant from the day one but we shut our minds on it. He said aims of every Pakistani was the same but this could not be transformed into the national objective.

The Prime Minister said that his Government had decided to address itself to all these questions, which had thus far remained unresolved.

To begin with, he said, his Government had started with enforcement of economic reforms and had concluded the historic water apportionment accord.

"However the biggest question I am addressing today is that of the introduction of Shari'ah Bill. While it is a document of a few pages, but in substance it is a vital legal document, which carries the essence of the one thousand year struggle waged by the Muslims of the subcontinent," he said.

The Prime Minister said that during electioneering, his party had promised to the electorate that in the case of victory, "we will make Pakistan a truly Islamic welfare state".

Once inducted into power, he said, the basic question cropping up for his Government was as to where from to start.

"I have made a mention of the Shari'ah Bill, but with the adoption of this bill, the whole requirement is not by itself served. It is because, every law has to be in conformity with the constitution. Hence, even after passage of Shari'ah Bill, the situation could not have changed substantially. It was because merely with the adoption of a bill, Koran and Sunnah did not become the supreme law. In the wake of vast thinking, learning and constultations, it was decided that until and unless amendments into the constitution are effected, supremacy of Holy Koran and Sunnah could not be enforced", he said.

He disclosed that it had been decided that the matter pending for the past forty-two years be resolved "once and for all" and added that Koran and Sunnah were the lasting divine message which shall prevail.

The Prime Minister said while the world pushed ahead fast in respect of progress and prosperity, we were still to decide as to what should be our supreme law?

He regretted that over the past, our behaviour as a nation had been to delay tackling of our problems. "Instead, we remained busy in creating more problems", he said, and posed a question if this behaviour continued then who was going to solve our problems.

He expressed his concern at the sorry plight of our society. "We talk of Islam only, while in actuality, our character, civilization and law and order is in such a sorry shape that those assigned task of extending justice to the hardpressed are themselves asking for their own safety and those of their children", he added.

He said in fact there was nobody to take care of the poor and oppressed class, while holders of unauthorised weapons had become a dreaded force.

"Those who should have a plough, hammer and pen in their hands, are instead holding Kalashnikovs—and whose targets are peaceful citizens", he added.

He said, corruption and malpractices had eaten the very fabric of our society.

About employment and education, he said while third divisioners hailing from well-to-do families managed to procure services those holding first divisions could not obtain jobs, for the only reason that their parents were not influential.

He said, majority of the masses remained below poverty line and faced numerous problems, besides lack of basic civic amenities.

The Prime Minister said if he failed to alleviate the sufferings of the poor, he would perceive that he had forsaken the cause for which he was in power.

He recounted the manifold sacrifices rendered by the poor for the cause of independence of Pakistan and said "the poor man has the same rights on Pakistan as those of Mian Nawaz Sharif."

"I have not come here to pass time" or do "naukari" [be a bureaucrat] the Prime Minister said and added that he was at the helm of affairs only to shoulder the enormous responsibilities.

He said "how long shall we as a nation waste our precious time in mere discussion on matters of our political, ideological, constitutional legal nature and those pertaining to articles of faith—while we are badly in need of devoted efforts to implement our rich possession".

"While the world is marching fast to meet the challenges to be reposed by the twenty first century, we are still to decide our direction of progress", he regretted.

The Prime Minister said that we did not avail vital changes during the last fourty-four years. The twenty-first century was drawing nearer the changes were knocking at our doors and we will have to respond to the needs those who would try to create hinderance in this regard would be the enemies of Islam, Pakistan and the people. [sentence as published]

He said Islam had never been a disputed issue in the country. Each and every Pakistani Muslim was ready to even sacrifice his life for the glory of Islam.

Apprehensions and problems were only limited to the problem-mongers, he said adding that that any ordinary Muslim would always opt for the Holy Koran if asked to select amongst the constitution or the Holy Koran.

The Prime Minister said the poor in the country did not lack spirit of Islam. He said he used to think as to what relevance had the poor with the holding of seminars in the name of Islam. Do these poor lack Islamic spirit or drinking water to remain alive? They needed water, education for their children, treatment for their diseases and an abode to live, he added.

It was our first duty to provide the poor and hard pressed people, what they had not. For this objective fundmantal issues needed to be resolved on priority. So taking a step ahead of Shari'ah Bill, the Prime Minister said he had decided to amend the constitution. This decision was not taken under pressure from any individual or a group but keeping the human miseries in mind.

The Prime Minister said he took this bold decision to mitigate human sufferings to honour the commitments made during his election campaign and to implement the party manifesto.

He said under this decision two bills were being moved immediately. One is the Shari'ah Bill while the other related to constitutional amendments, through which Koran and Sunnah would be given the status of supreme law.

The people he said had a cherished desire to see the society transformed into an Islamic welfare society. Despite lapse of many years, they did not realise their dreams. It was a blessing that we were honoured to fulfil this long cherished desire of the people.

On the first priority, the nation wanted eradication of obscenity and nudity. He said in this regard a bill has been prepared which would be moved soon in the National Assembly.

A drastic plan would be launched soon to reform the education sector which had been a long smouldering issue. Necessary legislation would also be made in this matter.

Mian Nawaz Sharif said adulturation was an unpardonable crime against humanity. And a law was being framed for its elimination. Bribery was eating into the vitals of this society like termite. A bill in this regard was ready and would be moved in the assembly.

To cure the cancer of bribery, high-powered courts were being established which would be empowered to award life imprisonment and confiscate the property, he said. Besides, a law would be enforced to check the incidents of framing false cases against innocent persons. In such a case similar punishment would be awarded to the culprit.

Pakistan, he said, was created due to untold sacrifices of our elders and it is custodian of the honour and dignity of eleven crore Muslims. One who abuses it would be held responsible for insulting the entire eleven crore people of Pakistan. If an individual can sue another for insulting him how the insult of the eleven crore people can be afforded. A law to this effect was also in the making which would prohibit abusing the country. Severe punishment would be awarded for this heinous crime.

The nation cannot compromise on the honour and pride of the country. The spirit of national reconstruction and developments dampens in the countries which lose their respect, the Prime Minister said.

Mian Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan people wanted to see their country prosperous and honoured. He expressed the commitment to recast the society in accordance with the aspirations of the people. "My decision is firm, any hinderence created would be removed with the help of the masses. There would be no distance between the government and the people," he added.

The Prime Minister expressed the determination to reorganise administrative machinery and police force and hoped that it would eleminate "Safarish" [the practice of recommending someone for a job]. In its present

set-up these institutions only protect the status quo because these do not have the required potential.

In case the reoganisation of these institions also failed to reform the society he said he would consult the people and ask them to provide volunteers in the task of changing the fate of the nation.

The Prime Minister said the country was not created for poverty, hunger, ignorance, unemployment and human sufferings. People of this country deserved pleasures of life. For this purpose economy was being reformed to set it according to the Islamic principles.

The Prime Minister further announced the setting up of Baitul Mal for the needy.

The dream of ensuring supremacy of Koran and Sunnah cannot be realised until the poor had the access to justice, he added.

The Prime Minister said the courts would be established at various levels to provide an easy and speedy justice. He said a "Naib Munsif" [subordinate judge] court would be set up at union and town committee level. Similarly he said a court of more than one "Munsif" would be constituted at tehsil [revenue subdivision] headquarter, big towns and at the level of every city. He said there would be one or more "Munsif" at the district level. He said these courts would be empowered to hear all kinds of criminal and civil cases.

He said the police would now be required to complete its enquiry of cases within days and not within years.

He said the said courts would continue to hear the proceedings of the cases without any break after the start of the hearing. He said this would remove process of hearing after hearing which delayed the decision of the cases. He said the criminal cases would be decided within one month.

The Prime Minister said the Supreme Court, after dealing with all the pending cases, had now started expeditious decisions of the cases. He paid tributes to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and its judges for putting up such a performance. He hoped that the subordinate courts would follow in the footsteps of the Supreme Court.

Mr. Nawaz Sharif said at present the number of the under trial cases ran into lakh. He said the complainants in the courts were faced with a lot of hardships.

He said the affected party would now have one right of appeal after the verdict of the court. This, he said would avoid the longevity of the cases. He said the strong, on the basis of his wealth, would not be able to deny the right to the deserving, by way of making the second appeal.

He said fundamental changes were being introduced in the police system to ensure respect and security to the life and property of the citizens. He said under the new system the genuine requirements of the police would be met on the one hand and on the other it would be made an institution to provide peace and security.

He said a reasonable time period was being announced to deposit the unlicensed arms of all kind for putting an end to the Kalashnikov culture. He said there would be a proper count down of this period at radio, television and in the newspapers. He said after thie expiry of the said period anybody found in possession of illegal arms would be punished no matter how influential he might be. He said this punishment, keeping in view the events and circumstances, could be life imprisonment and confiscation of his property. He said at the same time the law would have the provision so that no gentleman was harassed through this law. He said any policeman who would frame fictitious case, would face the life imprisonment and confiscation of his property.

He said an all pervading revolution was needed to cast the whole life into an Islamic mould. He said the government had formulated a package of laws along with the Shari'ah Bill to achieve the purpose. he said the package of laws would be presented before the august House one after another.

He said certain guiding principles were being made for different offices and departments. He said these would be issued after the approval of the elected representatives. He said the implementation of these principles would be ensured.

He said a lot of work had to be done to bring in the basic changes for establishing a welfare society. He said we were confronted with the evils which got strengthened over the centuries.

Mr. Nawaz Sharif said, he believed that a good work should be commenced from one's own house. He said being head of the administration, it was his bounden duty, to begin the re-organisation under the Islamic traditions from the administration.

He said unless the administration was made to abide by the Islamic rules and traditions, the common man could not mould his life in accordance with Islamic principles. He said corruption, injustice, looting and trampling of citizens rights were negation of Islamic commandments.

He said the present administrative system was devised to run the system which was based on the imperialistic domination. He said the government functionaries, by spreading terror, were assigned to make the departments habitual of slavery.

The Prime Minister hoped the functionaries of the government would respect the aspsirations of the people and change themselves. He suggested that a "day of the renewal of pledge" be celebrated by all the government functionaries along with the masses. He said apparently it would be a mere rite but when repeated time and again, the violator of the pledge made before the other would lose respect. He said no person, how irresponsible

he might be, would like to be lower in esteem before others. He said the constraints of respect and morality though looked fragile yet if these were made the trust of the people, nothing was stronger than these values.

He said when a corrupt man would lead a life beyond his financial means he would feel ashamed before his co-habitants in a locality. He said the fear of humiliation was stronger than the fear of law.

He said the concentration of powers particularly discretionary in the hands of government officials, were the root cause of all evils. He said such rules and regulations were being framed which gave superiority to rights of the common man over the powers of the government officials. He said after such rules it would not be possible for the officials to disgrace the poor man. He said a government official should not be empowered to trample the rights of everybody. He said neither it be in his powers that he should use the laws the way he liked to satisfy his wishes.

The Prime Minister said government officials would have to justify their every decision. He said the performance of every department would be taken into task. He said public complaints about the behaviour and morality of a certain government offical would become the part of his personal file and would affect his promotion or demotion.

He said mere presence in office of file work would not be the criterion to judge the performance of an official. He said the real performance of an official would be judged on the basis of keeping up the cherished ideals of the country while performing his duties. He said his performance would also be assessed on the basis of how much benefit or facility he provided to a common man while discharging his duties.

He said if an official during twenty-five years of his service failed to ensure the genuine rights of even a single person, he, in fact, squandered his own and the time of the nation.

He said during his speech he could touch only certain point of the gigantic work which was being commenced.

The Prime Minister said that any nation with incomplete task and unclear objective could not determine the direction of its priorities and progress.

"We had been facing this situation during the last forty-four years and kept on advancing without any clear path."

He observed that efforts made so far did not yield any positive results as the entire blames were made without any specific objective and direction.

The Prime Minister said: "We are initiating a process to discharge all the responsibilities and to fill up all these gaps," he added.

He expressed the hope that the elected members of the Parliament would be fully aware of the importance and utility of the process with the start of a new chapter of the history with full dignity.

He said they will also tell the entire world that the role of Parliament in an Islamic and democratic country was more than the legislation. It not only approves laws but also provides guidance for a complete code of life to organise the activities of various sections of the society.

The Prime Minister prayed to Almighty Allah for the success of the liberation movements of the Kashmiri and Afghan brethren.

Minister Details Privatization of State Plants

BK0904104891 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] The government is fully committed to implement the disinvestment and deregularization policy. This was stated by Federal Finance Minister Mr. Sartaj Aziz while answering a number of supplementaries during question hour in the National Assembly this morning. In reply to a question by Rana Nazir Ahmed Khan, the finance minister said the Deregulation and Disinvestment Committee has recommended for denationalization in three phases of 20 vegetable ghee plants, four cement plants, and six engineering plants. He said the implementation will take around six months in each phase.

Replying to another question by Mian Mohammad Zaman, Mr. Sartaj Aziz, said the management of the Muslim Commercial Bank was transferred to the private sector yesterday. Answering a question by Chaudhary Anwar Ali Cheema, the finance minister said the third meeting of the National Finance Commission, which is in progress in Islamabad, would, among other things, consider grant of royalty and surcharge on gas and electricity to the provinces.

Minister Briefs Senate on Kashmir Situation

BK1104102391 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The Senate is to discuss latest situation in occupied Kashmir emerging as a result of atrocities by Indian forces against innocent and unarmed Kashmiris. Admitting the motion in this regard by Professor Khurshid Ahmed, the chairman, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, said he would fix time for this purpose later.

The minister for science and technology, Mr. Hamid Nasir Chatha, told the house that Pakistan had already called upon India to withdraw its security forces from held-Kashmir and repeal repressive laws being used to suppress the struggle of the Kashmiri people. The minister declared that it was simply not possible for the government or people of Pakistan to remain indifferent to this state of affairs. He said the government had urged India to withdraw various special laws like disturbed

areas act, the armed forces special powers act empowering all to commit excesses against innocent Kashmiri people. Mr. Chatha pointed out that the government had appealed to the United Nations, international community, human rights organization and world media to take notice of the Indian brutalities in occupied Kashmir. He said the Indian forces were violating human rights in held-Kashmir on massive scale.

Earlier, Professor Khurshid Ahmed and Syed Abdullah Shah pointed out that the atrocities committed by Indian forces in the held territory have reached an alarming stage.

Committee Urges Probe of Kashmir 'Atrocities'

BK1204084691 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 12 Apr 91

[Text] The Kashmir Action Committee has again urged the UN Human Rights Commission and permanent members of the Security Council to depute a fact-finding mission to probe into the recent atrocities perpetrated by Indian occupation forces in held Kashmir. The committee has urged the Security Council members to discharge their obligation to work for the noble task of defending the rights of the oppressed people in the world irrespective of color, creed, or any other considerations. In a brief statement, the action committee has also demanded that provisions of the recently-passed Security Council resolution on Kurd population in Iraq should be applied equally to the people of Kashmir.

Ministry Denies Kidnapper's Demands Accepted

BK1004152791 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 10 Apr 91 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, April 9—Ministry of Interior has termed as baseless a report appearing in a section of the press yesterday alleging that the Federal Government is reported to have decided to accept the demands of kidnappers for securing the release of two Japanese tourists kidnapped recently by dacoits in Sindh.

He said that the Federal Government has issued instructions to Sindh Government to take all necessary actions to secure the release of Japanese students and other abductees.

Sri Lanka

Security Forces Kill 90 Tamil Militants

BK1104120491 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The security forces have successfully carried out two operations in the north and east. At Manthai in the Mannar District, the security forces killed about 60 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists. A large number is reported to have been wounded. At Meyankallau Kulam in the (Taptigarh) area in Batticaloa, the security forces killed 30 terrorists and wounded over 15; 20 weapons were discovered [as heard]. This was disclosed by the defense secretary, General Cyril Ranatunge, at yesterday's cabinet briefing. He said that security forces had also carried out successful operations in the Mannar-Vavuniya sector. Several mines have been cleared.

Referring to the Karainagar attack by the terrorists, Gen. Ranatunge said the attack destroyed buildings, but the forces successfully retaliated. Considerable damage was done by the terrorists; they are still reported to be firing in the area.

In reply to a question, the defense secretary said that operations in Mannar sector and Karainagar resulted in a death toll of around 700 to the terrorists, including several of their hardcore leaders, since the operations commenced in February. During this time, 111 from the security forces were killed and 187 wounded.

Gen. Ranatunge pointed out that complaints pertaining to the killing of Tamil civilians by a certain community with assistance of the STF [Special Task Force] were totally incorrect, according to investigation. Except for two incidents in the east, nothing else had been reported by the citizens committee. He said these are being investigated.

Responding to another question, he categorically said that the intention of the government was to establish peace and order for all community to live together.

Group To Study Impact of Global Changes

BK1104123491 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 11 Apr 91

[Text] The president has appointed a foreign affairs study group. This seven-member group is headed by Dr. Gamani Corea. This group would study current changes in the international order which have a direct bearing on the national interests of Sri Lanka. It will also study important changes within the area and their consequences for our present efforts toward regional cooperation. Specific issues which have a direct bearing on Sri Lanka's diplomacy is another subject they will consider. The group will submit special reports at the request of the president or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.